A GUILTY SATISFACTION: DETECTIVE FICTION AND THE READER

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SUMMARY

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the reasons why readers choose to read detective fiction. Taking Thomas De Quincey's satirical identification of the aesthetic quality of murder, I look at Edgar Allan Poe's detective fiction to find a non-satiric version of the same argument that emphasises the balancing quality of the ethical to the aesthetic. W.H. Auden's essay "The Guilty Vicarage" offers an argument concerning the reader's position in relation to these opposite components. I explore the ways in which Auden's arguments build into Freud's understanding of guilt, daydreams, the moral conscience, jokes, the uncanny and the death drive, and how these can be applied to the genre to help illustrate the reader's experience. Concurrent to this I offer an analysis of how the parallel developments in literary theory, particularly those of Barthes and Shklovsky, can be incorporated to enrich the understanding of these Freudian positions within the modern reader's experience.

It is my intention to open up a field of study within the genre that differs from the traditional Marxist approach. Particular emphasis is placed on the role of the experience of pleasure found when moments of commonality between the aesthetic and the ethical are reached– how these are often unsatisfactory– necessitating a repetition of the literary experience. It is my argument that such an approach to the reader's position within the genre has not been explored in such a detailed fashion, centring as it does upon the active role of guilt in pleasure felt by the reader as the motivation to repeat. To illustrate that this is an argument that is applicable to different historical phases of detective fiction the study undertakes analysis of the following authors: Arthur Conan Doyle, Wilkie Collins, Agatha Christie, Raymond Chandler, Graham Greene and John Fowles.

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INTRODUCTION: THE ETHICS AND AESTHETICS OF CRIME

> "But didn't you ever feel you wanted to steal something? Or kill somebody? You must have. Everybody feels those things."…
>
> …"You read too many detective stories," Guy said, and having heard himself, did not know where the words had come from.
>
> "They're good. They show all kinds of people can murder."
>
> "I've always thought that's exactly why they're bad."[1]

The conversation presented by Patricia Highsmith, coming at the opening of the second chapter of Strangers on a Train (1950), offers a moment in that text where what had been casual small talk moves onto a subject that motivates the course of the whole novel. The difference of opinion concerning the appeal of detective fiction places each character as a representative of one side of the dialogue which struggles for dominance by creating the necessary plot points. What Highsmith captures in microcosm is an illustration of the double motivation of the aesthetic and the ethical that the detective fiction reader works under when reading such a text.

This is a different perspective to that which has been most frequently voiced within the analysis of the genre. For many critics the reader enters into a role where s/he allows the detective character to dictate to them the way that the fictional world works. The general sense is that the reader finds enjoyment within the genre simply because s/he is allowed the opportunity to capitulate to a higher understanding who will explain. John G. Cawelti states: "This brings us to the final source of pleasure in the detective's explanation, the

[1] Patricia Highsmith, (1950) Strangers On A Train pp25-6

sense of relief that accompanies the detective's precise definition and externalisation of guilt."[2] There is more at work than a simple compliance– the use of the terms "relief" and "guilt" both suggest that there has been a greater immersion on the part of the reader in the process that precedes this denouement. Cawelti suggests that what is really needed is an understanding that there is a dialectic process at work between these approaches that can only be defined by being rooted in the formula of the given text: it is only by understanding the reason for the cultural production of the formula that we can find a grounding through which to understand these different functions.

Other critics, notably Geraldine Pederson-Krag[3], have argued that the structure of detective fiction aligns closely to the Freudian concept of the primal scene, arguing that the crime corresponds to the parent's sexual act and that the victim is the parent for whom the child has oedipal feelings. This makes the detective representative of the child whose primal scene needs to be investigated. Again this is a theory that separates the narrative of the detective from that experienced by the reader and it is my argument that the role of such psychoanalytic concepts as the primal scene is one that the reader is personally working through in their immersion within the aesthetic and ethical dialogue of the text. The detective may act as a fictionally constructed guide, offering one mouthpiece to the relationship between the aesthetic and the ethical, however, Pederson-Krag highlights that the criminal offers a similar guiding role. If the reader is not allowed access to the criminal drives within the fictional world any conclusion becomes unsatisfactory.

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[2] John G. Cawelti, (1976) Adventure, Mystery and Romance p90

[3] Geraldine Pederson-Krag, (1949) "Detective Stories and the Primal Scene" p14

Edgar Allan Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue"[4] demonstrates such a problem to readers. Critics have felt that within the narrative structure lay two problems[5]. The aesthetic ingenuity of the locked-room mystery appeared to challenge the reader to find a solution through their own mental processes in tandem with the detective: Dupin. Knowledge of which the reader was not sufficiently a party, that the solution required a specialism concerning animal hair, was felt to defeat such aesthetic aims. Secondly, it was argued that by revealing the criminal as an orang-utan there appeared to be no ethical conclusion or message. What the reader perceived as criminal ingenuity, and found of aesthetic appeal, became dissipated by a conclusion that stated all was a random event. That which the reader had chosen to read the text for, the promised "Murders", had become a lie, mere "accidents." The critical reader concludes that Poe's narrative has failed to capture the essentials of the genre even at a point where the genre had yet to be formalised.

The question that the criticism of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" raises concerns what it is about the narrative structure that necessitates a level of expectation within the reader with regard to that which must be appropriate about the conclusion. The narrator in his opening description of Dupin offers the following: "Observing him in these moods, I often dwelt meditatively upon the old philosophy of the Bi-Part Soul, and amused myself with the fancy of a double Dupin– the creative and the resolvent."[6] "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" intends to be an exploration of this "double Dupin." The reference to past theories of the "Bi-Part Soul" suggests that there is both separation and inter-relation

[4] Edgar Allan Poe, (1841) "The Murders in the Rue Morgue"

[5] For example: Dorothy L. Sayers, Stephen Knight, Martin Priestman.

[6] Edgar Allan Poe, (1841) "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", p168.

between these two sides that is important as a means to facilitate the "detective function." The expectation is that the reader will see how the combination of the two sides works to make the detective figure a success.

I will explore "aesthetic" and "ethical" in more detail but a rudimentary understanding is necessary. The aesthetic is taken to be concerned with the appreciation of the beautiful, usually in an artistic context. Poe's suggestion of Dupin's interest in the "creative" is in the need to define what is considered to be beautiful or artistic within the individual who is being presented. For a detective like Dupin, a character whose interest in crime is seen to be obsessional, it is logical to think that he would see the actions of the criminal in such aesthetic terms. Equally the "resolvent" is a process of reaching an absolute and definite conclusion within thought. The term ethical has connotations of the morally correct and is a further sense of the absolute. What is clear from the criticism of *"*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*"* is the understanding that there must be something more satisfying in the relationship between these "double" sides.

This returns us to Cawelti and his suggestion that at the conclusion of the detective text the sense of guilt is always externalised by the detective onto the individual figure who is denounced as the criminal. It is my belief that there is a far more complex process in action at this point that leads to a partial sense of sharing the guilt on the part of the reader. In essence:

> Yet, on the last page, a lingering doubt:
> The verdict, was it just? The judge's nerves,
> That clue, that protestation from the gallows,
> And our own smile… why, yes …

But time is always guilty. Someone must pay for
Our loss of happiness, our happiness itself.[7]

What Auden raises in his poem "Detective Story" is the way in which the "aesthetic" and the "ethical" are central to the satisfactory conclusion for the reader. In this stanza Auden is concerned with the state of the reader at the conclusion of a text. He raises the position of the ethical question in the nature of reaching a "verdict." Auden states an unequivocal if hesitant affirmation of this being the case but realises that this hesitation is the result of an immersive feeling of "guilt" on the part of the reader that has been embraced for slightly longer than expected. The concluding sentence of the stanza encapsulates the state of the satisfaction of desire for the reader, to find an ending of such a text correct is ultimately paradoxical but perfectly illustrative of this unique experience. On the one side the conclusion of the "just" should be something in which readers find happiness, it is the ethical being appropriately applied. "Our loss of happiness" is the loss of the aesthetic as aspects of the creativity that have been produced by both the criminal and the detective within the process of the narrative.

As Auden states, "time is always guilty"; and I argue that what drives the reader to access the double narrative of the aesthetic and the ethical is the need to place ourselves within this guilt. Within the poem Auden is professing a certain intellectual snobbishness by admitting an appreciation of a "lower" form of art, but I feel that what is being betrayed in this snobbishness is the admission of a wider sense of guilt. Detective fiction is a genre that brings the reader a means to explore the position s/he places him/herself in with

[7] W. H. Auden, (1936) "Detective Story" p151

relation to the incipient sense of guilt within society. It draws out a dialogue between the ethical and aesthetic sensibilities as a means through which to explore this guilt.

At this point we need to be clear as to what is understood by the classification "Detective Fiction." Dorothy L. Sayers puts forward the hypothesis that detective fiction follows the desired route that Aristotle outlined for tragedy within Poetics:

> He maintained that dreadful and alarming events produced their best effect when they occurred, "unexpectedly," indeed, but also "in consequence of one another." In one phrase he sums up the whole essence of the detective story proper. Speaking of the denouement of the work he says: "It is also possible to discover whether someone has done or not done something." Yes, indeed.[8]

The argument that what appeals is the combination of the unexpected coming in such a way that it must fit logically within the consequential possibilities that the text offers returns to the dissatisfaction in the denouement of *"*The Murders in the Rue Morgue" where such logic was felt not to be the case. It is the aesthetic side of the double narrative that needs such consequential satisfaction but as Sayers' own concluding affirmation illustrates this in itself is not satisfactory unless there is a concluding sense of ethical definition through the apportion of the blame, and thus criminality, of the identified doer of the act.

This Aristotelian perspective finds root elsewhere as Jacques Barzun,[9] David Grossvogel,[10] John G. Cawelti,[11] and most extensively Martin Priestman[12] have all

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[8] Dorothy L. Sayers (1946) "Aristotle on Detective Fiction" p26

[9] Jacques Barzun (1961) "Detection and Literary Art"

explored the comparable structures of detective fiction and Sophocles's Oedipus Rex, stating it to be the prototype for the classical detective formula. Grossvogel argues that the detective story is, beyond Aristotelian tragedy, the most extreme attempt to control an "uncanny" situation as it turns its world into a mechanistic structure. By referring to the uncanny Grossvogel is referencing Sigmund Freud's essay of 1919 where Freud states that "the term 'uncanny' (*unheimlich*) applies to everything that was intended to remain secret, hidden away, and has come into the open."[13] For Grossvogel the force of control of this coming into the open becomes overriding and the existential concerns of character are ignored in favour of unfolding events in ways that serve only the narratives' self-destruction. This self-destruction creates a closed narrative, one that offers no sense of continuity beyond the "ludic" structure presented.

By using the term ludic, Grossvogel is stating that such texts have rules and the reader feels placed in opposition with the detective in a challenge to reach the solution first:

> The reader was invited to become the (nonexistent) detective by separating (and discarding) literature from those objects. The reader remained external to that literature and, to that extent, the game proposed by the detective story engaged the reader on the level of a parafictional reality. But a mystery so constructed could not convey a *sense* of mystery: the detachment of its reader prevented the story's

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[10] David I. Grossvogel, (1979) Mystery and Its Fictions: From Oedipus to Agatha Christie

[11] John G. Cawelti, (1976) Adventure, Mystery and Romance

[12] Martin Priestman (1990) Detective Fiction and Literature: The Figure in the Carpet

[13] Sigmund Freud (1919) "The Uncanny" p132

> everyday circumstances from being counterpoised to a credible *otherness* within it. The intimate vacancy of the genre was recapitulative and total.[14]

For Grossvogel this leaves such texts open to problems to the point that he sees the reading of detective fiction as a form of non-reading, certainly one that is vacant of a real engagement on the part of the reader. Such an experience is felt to be parallel to the text rather than immersive. Roger Caillois' "The Detective Novel as Game"[15] further argues that the ludic quality of such literature creates an ever widening distance between this fiction and real life: "The novel and the detective novel are therefore totally different: the first takes human nature as its basis and its subject, while the second only reluctantly admits human nature because it must." There is always a pre-designed and functional purpose for the action of the murderer or criminal, making them pieces in a game rather than real beings.

Richard Alewyn[16] argues that the purpose of detective fiction is to shake up the conventional perspective of the world and reassert the role of individuality. The ludic arguments shy away from such a perspective. My belief is that a better analogy is to think of the detective text as a "debate". One can look at the formal debate as a ludic process but what is important in a debate, despite it having similar competitive elements, is the role of the spectator. Using the conversation from Strangers on a Train as a template we can use the Socratic debate as a model, with the criminal taking what could be stated as the

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[14] Grossvogel, David I. (1979) Mystery and its Fictions p20

[15] Roger Caillois, (1941) "The Detective Novel as Game" p11

[16] Richard Alewyn, (1974) "The Origins of the Detective Novel"

"aesthetic" argument and the detective the "ethical" one– although only as generalisations– from which we can outline a generic detective story as follows:

> First team argument: the criminal sets out their opinion of the fictional society by committing a crime.
>
> Second team argument: the detective states that such infringement of the fictional society is wrong through the need to investigate such criminal activity.
>
> First team rebuttal: the criminal furthers their case by performing a second crime.
>
> Second team rebuttal: the detective furthers their investigation by suggesting the criminality inherent in certain clues.
>
> Closing statements.

It is accepted that the detective "team" will usually win but there is a point, as Auden's poem stated, where the reader has to accept both arguments equally before reaching the desired conclusion– the point at which Highsmith ends her conversation. A further comparison would be the role that Freud identifies for the listener of a joke: it is the focal status that is central to deciding if something is funny as all the elements of the telling are received. A more apt analogy would be that the reader is like a member of the jury.

This has wider implications for a large area of literary criticism concerning the genre. In his essay "The Case against Detective Fiction"[17] Eric Routley argues the moral implication of what he considers to be a puritanical form of reading. It is his contention that

[17] Erik Routley, (1972) "The Case Against Detective Fiction"

Pederson-Krag's argument that detective fiction is always illustrative of the primal scene[18] goes too far in the attribution of guilt to the process of reading; instead he offers that detective fiction is more about relieving "anxiety". By recognising that an "anxiety" exists he argues that this reassures the reader that their puritan values are intact. It is ironic that the title of Routley's essay evokes the sense of debate whilst also admitting it is only one side of the argument.

Ernst Kaemmel offers a similar perspective in his essay "Literature under the Table: The Detective Novel and its Social Mission"[19]. Kaemmel applies Routley's critique of puritanical values to capitalistic ones. He stresses that the majority of the stories offer a threat to property or social order that falls in line with the capitalist ideal and stresses that such a fiction could not exist in a socialist state. What Kaemmel is doing here is marking out a defined binary opposition, using the conflict language of Marx, which he feels means that the reader must comply with oppression at the denouement.

This use of the theories of Karl Marx is the largest single basis for expression of the oppositional approach in the criticism of detective fiction and has limitations. Franco Moretti[20] explores how contradictions between structure and function create the sociological voice within these texts, by which he in turn means the socialist voice. These texts test and specify the validity of such a voice in the face of the oppressive forces of

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[18] Geraldine Pederson-Krag, (1949) "Detective Stories and the Primal Scene"

[19] Ernst Kaemmel, (1962) "Literature Under the Table: The Detective Novel and its Social Mission"

[20] Franco Moretti, (1983) "Clues"

capitalism. Ernest Mandel[21] takes a distinctly Marxist perspective in the interest of uncovering how the crime story acts as an illustration of the narrative of bourgeois society. Both examples feel like lost opportunities that take for granted a position of conflict and lose any sense of the debate between the two areas of society that these texts offer; Moretti's book in particular is overly repetitive and ironically suffers from the fact that readers quickly become aware of what his solution will be before he begins a new analysis because it is pre-ordained.

Agatha Christie's "Foreword to Cards on the Table" offers a perceptive exploration of an alternative motivation for the detective reader. She opens with the metaphor that detective fiction is like a horse race where the clever bet would be upon the outsider, but this is a structural belief that she outwardly rejects. From here she outlines the intentions of her present text:

> Since I do not want my faithful readers to fling away this book in disgust, I prefer to warn them beforehand *that this is not that kind of book.* There are only *four* starters and any one of them, *given the right circumstances*, might have committed the crime. That knocks out forcibly the element of surprise. Nevertheless there should be, I think, an equal interest attached to four persons, each of whom has committed murder and is capable of committing further murders. They are four widely divergent types, the motive that drives each one of them to crime is peculiar to that person, and each one would employ a different method.[22]

[21] Ernest Mandel, (1984) Delightful Murder

[22] Agatha Christie, (1936) Cards On The Table, foreword, ppxi-xii

She concludes by emphasising the deduction should "be entirely *psychological*"[23], before making an interesting statement that this case appealed greatly to Poirot but bored his companion Hastings. What Christie states is that detective fiction readers should place themselves within the text as the detective does, as an explorer of the crime, rather than simply adopt the passive position of being informed. In this text Christie offers the first introduction of Poirot's second recurrent assistant, Mrs Ariadne Oliver. This character is an author of detective fiction, often taken as a loose self parody of Christie herself. Oliver offers a more creative foil for Poirot than the simple reportage of Hastings, and one that has potentially more authority. Christie contradicts the position of the reader that many critics since have identified with her work, and detective fiction in general. She calls for the reader to explore all characters equally, their divergences, their motivations; the reader's experience when adopting such an immersive role in the text is the central preoccupation of this thesis.

The following quotations reflect this argument:

> Throughout its long-lasting tradition, literary crime serves as an ambiguous mirror of social values, reflecting both our overt commitments to certain principles of morality and order and our hidden resentments and animosity against these principles.[24]

[23] Christie, pii

[24] Dorothy L. Sayers, (1929) "Omnibus of Crime", p77

> Detective fiction thus becomes a mirror to society. Through it we may see society's fears made most explicit; for some, those fears are exorcised by the fiction.[25]

That both Winks and Sayers use the metaphor of a mirror is apt. Within any reading of a detective text the concern is with the psychological mirroring that the process addresses. It is the "hidden resentments and animosity", the "fears", and the "supreme interest" in the "*mind*" of the murderer that is paramount in the reading experience of detective fiction, but it is the conclusions concerning such at the denouement that elicits insight into the values of the society explored. The position of the reader in the debate already explored is a paradoxical one of being an outsider looking in with the purpose of seeing reflections of the self being expressed in the opposing arguments. As with a mirror we look into it and feel a sense of immersion, of being inside it, whilst being equally aware of being outside and distinctly separate. Such is the experience of the detective fiction reader.

Detective fiction can be seen as a perfect illustration of dialogic reading, the process of not simply accepting the presentations of text, no matter how much a Watson or Hastings figure may wish us to do so, but placing ourselves in a reading experience where every piece of evidence is brought into question. By adopting a questioning perspective within reading, readers evaluate each trope the novel presents within relation to each further one that arises. All is open to destabilisation and must be challenged until the logic of the dialogue is such that it offers a cohesive conclusion. Readers explore ways to expurgate being in such an emotional position, what Sayers refers to as "fear". It is the concern of this

[25] Robin W. Winks, (1988) "Introduction", p7

thesis to go beyond such a general term as “fear” and explore what it is that such reading explores within the reader’s psychological experience.

In the course of this thesis it is my belief that through analysing the dialogue between the aesthetic and the ethical, and the different ways that that can be seen to be manifest in the theories of psychoanalysis and narratology, an understanding of the appeal of detective fiction that has the reader at the centre can be outlined. I believe that this enjoyment is not a singular experience but one that differs for each reader, for this reason I will outline the motivations for the points of divergence that the genre frequently undertakes. Such an understanding, whilst here limited to a single genre, offers insights into the reading experience that are more universal.

As a starting point I will explore the literary and historical context from which the genre of detective fiction arose as I feel the form is reflective of the changes of expectation that arose in the reader at this point. Further to this I will explore the concepts of the aesthetic and the ethical using Thomas De Quincey’s “On Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts” (1827). It is of interest that the first use of the term aesthetic within English should appear within a text that explicitly offers a satiric focus upon an area that would not generally be considered to apply to common definitions of the term. This in turn will lead to a reading of two texts that have been prominent in the psychological exploration of detective fiction: Carlo Ginzburg’s (1986) “Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm” and Slavoj Žižek’s (1992) “Two Ways to Avoid the Real of Desire.” In each of these essays there is a close parallel drawn between the roles of the detective, the analyst and the historian that emphasises the role of the need to uncover as part of the reading experience. Žižek, in particular, raises two concepts that are central to the understanding of the reader in the genre, these being: “the place-holder of the lack” which raises the issue of the need to

locate that which is absent as being central to the textual construction; and the lure which identifies those textual elements that offer the potential for the forward momentum of the investigation.

To further understand the connection between the aesthetic and ethical in detective fiction I will explore W. H. Auden's essay "The Guilty Vicarage"[26] to discuss the debate that surrounds the reader's motivation and satisfaction when reading detective fiction. Using Auden's conclusion that the reader of the detective fiction is someone who feels a "sense of sin" I will analyse Freud's exploration concerning the moral conscience to formulate an argument that rather than sin, with its religious connotations, the reader of detective fiction is exploring their own sense of guilt as a member of society. Central to this is Freud's suggestion that the desire for the satisfaction of such guilt is indefinable in general terms and can only ever be characterised as: "All these things have an element of x in common."[27] It is my argument that it is the need to satisfy this sense of guilt that motivates the reader to bring the investigation of the text to a conclusion that s/he feels is the correct one for the society that s/he has become immersed within. From this position, returning to the concept of the detective text as a means through which to explore the primal scene, I will use Jacques Lacan and Barbara Johnson's analysis to explore how this theory is applicable to Poe's "The Purloined Letter."[28] The arguments demonstrate an understanding of the way that detective fiction is often predicated on a sense of

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[26] W. H. Auden, (1948) "The Guilty Vicarage"

[27] Freud, (1901) On Dreams p651

[28] Edgar Allan Poe, (1845) "The Purloined Letter"

defamiliarisation that works to create a sense of dislocation that the reading process seeks to eradicate.

I will move on to explore how such a position complies with the theories of narrative that have been expressed concerning the genre in the work of Todorov, Brooks and Shklovsky. From this position I will argue that the analysis concerning pleasure within the reading process developed by Roland Barthes allows a stronger understanding of the reader as the spectator who is serving to construct their own meaning through observing the dialogue of the aesthetic and the ethical. It is my argument that by looking at Barthes' concept of jouissance– a sense of satisfactory concluding that raises its own conflicting issues– comparisons can be drawn with the satisfaction of the moral conscience that Freud explored.

It is my argument that by using Shklovsky's concept of the motif it can be seen how this desire for jouissance can be applied to the process of reading. This returns the analysis to Žižek's exploration of the role of the lure as a specific form of the motif that is characteristic of the narrative drive in the genre. With both the motif and the lure I will explore the specific use of the pun as a means through which the detective text can create the desired need for satisfaction. I will argue that further applying recent developments in narratology– in particular the ethical issues that can arise through paralipsis and etymology– helps to support this understanding of the reader of detective fiction and I will outline how this informs the reading of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Adventure of the Speckled Band."[29]

[29] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, (1981), The Penguin Complete Sherlock Holmes

With the spectator being established as analogous to that of the reader of detective fiction, I will turn my attention to how being placed in this position can offer variant experiences, even within a singular text. By looking at Freud's theories concerning the joke work, I will explore how this form can inform the understanding of the variance of pleasure that can be derived from access to the aesthetic and the ethical as this is another form where the audience is placed in a spectator position. To highlight how this specifically can be applied to an understanding of the detective fiction text I will use Wilkie Collins' The Moonstone (1868) as a central text. In particular, I will focus upon the way in which certain forms of joke– for example smut– can offer an ethical dimension whilst striving to achieve an aesthetic result.

It is my argument that if we look closely at the texts of the golden age and the hard boiled schools it can be seen that there is a divergence in the desire for pleasure that each group represents. I will undertake a detailed exploration of Agatha Christie's Curtain (1975) and Raymond Chandler's The Long Goodbye (1953) in order to argue that the application of Freud's theories of the uncanny and the death drive respectively offer a means through which to suggest why such divergence was necessary. These texts raise interesting questions concerning the importance of repetition, doubling, and self-destruction that are reflective of the experiences that the detective reader places her/himself within when choosing to become immersed in the textual society.

In conclusion I will consider the issue of divergence as a characteristic of the genre as it has progressed throughout the twentieth century, in particular with regard to the greater emphasis on the criminal. I will explore whether there is room to see such criminally driven fiction offering the same means for pleasure as the detective text. It is my

conjecture that such fiction betrays signs of a return to the shame-based narrative and the concerns over this form being elevated as having greater value must be explored.

CHAPTER ONE: THE TRANSITION FROM SHAME TO GUILT

The Newgate Calendar was a form of literary crime reportage from 1773 until the early nineteenth century. These texts appeared to be predominantly concerned with the ethical dominance of the authority, leaving the reader with no alternative position in their reading, reflecting the climate of confession and what Mikhail Bakhtin[30] would refer to as the monologic authoritarian voice of early societies. Consisting of short articles the intention of these texts was to outline the criminality of those most noted criminals of the time, conveyed in a style that was designed to emphasise the shame of the criminal act. Stephen Knight's Form and Ideology in Crime Fiction[31] identifies how The Newgate Calendar developed. Central to this development was that society made the transition from being shame-orientated to being guilt-orientated:

> Shame is greatly feared since it is an exclusion from the valued, and ultimately mutually protective group. The Celtic notion that a poet may satirise a man to death arises from this system. In a guilt-orientated society, on the other hand, the individual creates his or her own ideas of rectitude, and misbehaviour is felt personally as guilt even if it is not publicly criticised or even recognised as wrong. Morality is private and public displays of virtue and honour are seen as hollow shams.[32]

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[30] Mikhail Bakhtin, The Bakhtin Reader

[31] Stephen Knight (1980) Form and Ideology in Crime Fiction

[32] Knight, p26

This distinction between the climate of shame and that of guilt is central to the perspective of the reader of detective fiction. In a situation of shame the reader would be placed in a position where his/her means to feel such an emotion is dictated to by the "valued" group from which s/he is excluded, a clear example being the figure of the Squire as law in the early feudal society. There is no dialogue here, the monologism being, in Bakhtin's analysis, a stable, unified language, but one which inherently was resistant to internal questioning and variance of discourse, much as the autocratic societies of the time perceived their system of government.

As Knight states the significant change comes in the shift of focus away from the authoritarian that occurred in the increasingly democratic industrial society of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. In the case of British crime this can be seen in the increased formalisation of the police force, and the tax payer's expectations. With a functioning police force– from the city watch, to the Bow Street Runners (1749), the Metropolitan Police (1828), and the Detective Police (1838), until finally the London model was adopted nationally in 1856– and democratically elected law makers following the reform act of 1832,[33] there is a greater sense within the individual of accountability concerning the law. Coupled with increased suffrage and raised taxation, such changes in the perspective of the populace and their place within it led naturally to a greater sense of

[33] The 1832 Reform act was the major change in the British parliamentary constituency borders brought about through the need for the new industrial cities to be adequately represented. Such reform can be seen to be the culmination of moves in the parliamentary and judicial systems that could trace their roots back to the enlightenment and the restoration of Charles II.

personal responsibility with the society that the individual was a part of.[34] For the individual it is no longer a case that a "valued" group dictates the law, rather s/he, as a democratic individual, is by extension the "valued" law-maker in this form of society.

This creates a new perspective on the way that the individual perceives the presence of crime within that society, and thus the way that it is reflected in the literature. D. A Miller[35] argues that concurrent with the creation of the police force comes distrust for that institution within contemporary novels such as the presentation of the Bow Street Runners in Oliver Twist.[36] The novels regularly, where the police appear, set them against other points of surpassing interest, keeping the police in their place in the periphery. However, Miller suggests that the police apparatus functions analogously in these novels. In the middle-class world in which most of them exist, anarchy does not ensue if a law is transgressed. An informal principle of organisation and control takes charge. It is this paradoxical reflection of the police, a force that a democratic society should have but is equally embarrassed about, and more importantly afraid of, which elicits the sense of guilt. As a contributor to that society, any group transgression becomes a personal transgression. The presence of the police symbolises that such transgressions occur, and in turn that the society member may become a suspect. In the guilt-orientated society the detective novel

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[34] Highly influential here were the thoughts of the French enlightenment that led to the founding principles of both the American declaration of Independence and the French Revolution. The growth of economic theory must also be noted in terms of society being seen to be more accountable.

[35] D. A. Miller, (1988) The Novel and the Police

[36] Charles Dickens, (1838) Oliver Twist

offers a necessary form as it becomes a facilitator for the understanding of the moral paradox of being afraid of the police force which society necessitates. Detective fiction offers a sense of security which the society in itself does not facilitate.

Michel Foucault's Discipline and Punish[37] adds to this understanding of the genre. Foucault examines the historical and sociological adaptations in attitudes towards crime that led to the present situation where prison is the predominant form of punishment and the police force the law-enforcing agency. For Foucault this is just one manifestation of a greater ideological shift in the attitudes towards crime and guilt. Literature that dealt with the subject of the presentation of criminal activity as such demonstrated that an ideological shift was being performed through an alteration in perspective:

> We are far removed indeed from those accounts of the life and misdeeds of the criminal in which he admitted his crimes, and which recounted in detail the tortures of his execution: we have moved from the exposition of the facts or the confession to the slow process of discovery; from the execution to the investigation; from the physical confrontation to the intellectual struggle between criminal and investigator. It was not only the broadsheets that disappeared with the birth of the literature of crime; the glory of the rustic malefactor and his sombre transformation into a hero by the process of torture and execution went with them. The man of the people was now too simple to be the protagonist of subtle truths. In this new genre, there were no popular heroes or great executions; the criminal was wicked, of course, but he was also intelligent; and although he was punished, he did not have to suffer. The

[37] Michel Foucault, (1975), Discipline and Punish, trans. Alan Sheridan, (1977).

> literature of crime transposes to another social class the spectacle that had surrounded the criminal.[38]

The predominance of texts like The Newgate Calendars, with their castigation of shame, was, Foucault argues, supplanted by the fictional crime story, exploring the concept of guilt, in the same way that the old form of confession was supplanted by trial by jury in the area of criminal justice.

Foucault states there was a transitional period which covered such works as Godwin's Caleb Williams up to texts such as Charles Dickens's Oliver Twist, where crime is studied but does not have a heroic champion to defeat it. This new champion was eventually found within this greater formalisation of the disciplinary and investigatory systems in society through the creation of police and detecting forces. The same would be the case in the redefinition of the literature of crime, starting first with the figure of Vidocq:

> But the almost mythical importance that he assumed in the eyes of his contemporaries was based not on this, perhaps embellished past; it was not even based on the fact that for the first time in history, a former inmate of a convict-ship, redeemed or quite simply bought, became a chief of police, but rather on the fact that, in him, delinquency visibly assumed its ambiguous status as an object and instrument for a police apparatus that worked both against it and with it.[39]

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[38] Foucault, p69

[39] Foucault, p283

What Foucault illuminates is a process where the narrative of society becomes epitomised in the character of one man who is able to articulate with authority from both sides before becoming the focus for the ultimate decision of justice. He is the hero for these modern times and the paradoxical nature of the character frames him as a centre of debate, and logically, by extension, investigation. But the texts of Vidocq are not truly detective fiction texts.

In the same way texts such as The Newgate Calendar did not comply with the definition of detective fiction because they were dominated by the role of the criminal and the shame of the crime, Vidocq offered an equal monological voice. In his text he outlined how he assumed the position of the "valued" group and shamed those who would be punished, revelling in the discovery of this shame. However, Foucault states that Vidocq marked an important transition:

> Vidocq marks the moment when delinquency, detached from other illegalities, was invested by power and turned inside out. It was then that the direct, institutional coupling of police and delinquency took place: the disturbing moment when criminality became one of the mechanisms of power.[40]

It was this element of the delinquent figure within the characterisation of Vidocq, and the conception of the literary detective, that was so essential to the reader's experience of these texts and became an important factor, not least in the way that Poe characterises his Dupin figure as being an amateur who revels in defeating the legitimate police.

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[40] Foucault, p283

This delinquent aspect of the detective figure could in itself be seen as the artistically appealing element. Such appeal is raised in detail in Thomas De Quincey's essay "Of Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts."[41] If the methods of the criminal were the appeal of The Newgate Calendar or the writings of Vidocq, the reader would find only dissatisfaction. The overt moral authority and ethical dominance presented stifling any interest in this aspect. De Quincey argues for an acceptance of the exploration of murder in artistically defined terms, what he refers to as the "aesthetic" dimensions of that act, once the moral dimension of the criminal investigation has passed. This aesthetic aspect is central to De Quincey's argument rather than murder per se. For De Quincey the concept of aesthetics, the rigorous application that he felt was tied to the term, needed to be explored by extending it to areas where it did not seem to belong, of which murder offered the perfect satirical focus. Where murder just seemed a convenient device for De Quincey it raises an important starting point for the detective fiction reader.

As Joel Black suggests:

> It constitutes a sustained satiric critique of a philosophical tradition epitomised by Kant that consistently assumed a coherent, nonproblematic relation between ethics and aesthetics, and within the latter domain, between the experiential forms of the beautiful and the sublime. By treating murder as an art form, De Quincey demonstrated the aesthetic subversion of the beautiful by the sublime, and more generally, the philosophical subversion of ethics by aesthetics.[42]

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[41] Thomas De Quincey, (1827) "On Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts"

[42] Joel Black, (1991) The Aesthetics of Murder p15

What De Quincey intended as satire is something that Poe redefined as a means of motivation, and method, within his detective figure in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue". From Black's conclusion it can be deduced that if, as Winks stated, detective fiction is an "ambiguous mirror of social values," and as Cawelti argued it is by looking at the response of the reader that some of this ambiguity can be defined, then increased understanding of this relation between the ethical and the aesthetic will offer a means through which to explore how this genre combines such sociological values with psychological concerns.

Poe's narrator intimated that the "bi-part soul"[43] was central to Dupin's success, allowing the necessary delinquency voiced by Foucault. The genre has always been concerned with psychological motivation and the functioning of the mind as it wrestles with the dialogue between the ethical and the aesthetic, at first taking its lead from the ethical discussion of writers such as Kant.[44] At the core of the Detective text is the destabilisation that occurs through what had been considered nonproblematic: the initial crime. As Black states discussing murder in both fictional and factual contexts:

> Murder drives a wedge into our comforting belief that things are what they seem, that the world is as it ought to be, that reality and appearance, ethics and aesthetics, are seamless, compatible realms.[45]

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[43] Edgar Allan Poe, (1841) "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", p168

[44] Immanuel Kant, (1785) Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals

[45] Joel Black, (1991) The Aesthetics of Murder, p18

The reader must be central to this process because this is a figurative account of a state that the reader experiences continually. The imbalance between the ethical and the aesthetic generates a sense of guilt that must be explored.

De Quincey phrases his text as an address to a society that has the need to enter dialogue concerning the true nature of murder, to explore this criminal potential without feeling the ethical oppression:

> They profess to be curious in homicide; amateurs and dilettanti in the various modes of bloodshed; and, in short, Murder-Fanciers. Every fresh atrocity of that class, which the police annals of Europe bring up, they meet and criticise as they would a picture, statue, or other work of art.[46]

De Quincey does not present a society which is intent upon committing murders but rather exploring the artistic nature of those that have occurred. What De Quincey presents, albeit with the discussion of real crime, is an illustration of a society made up of those who are proto-detective fiction readers. The aesthetic pleasure comes from the exploration of the murder presented in relation to the society member's own interest in how such an act could be committed, even though this interest is one that will never be acted upon.

For example, in the "Second Paper on Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts" De Quincey goes as far as to stress that despite his interest and involvement in the society he would himself be an inept murderer:

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[46] Thomas De Quincey, (1827) "On Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts", p8

> The truth is, I am a very particular man in everything relating to murder; and perhaps I carry my delicacy too far. The Stagirite most justly, and possibly with a view to my case, placed virtue in the τὸ με΄σον or middle point between two extremes. A golden mean is certainly what every man should aim at. But it is easier talking than doing; and, my infirmity being notoriously too much milkiness of heart, I find it difficult to maintain that steady equatorial line between the two poles of too much murder on the one hand and too little on the other. I am too soft– Doctor, too soft; and people get excused through me– nay go through life without an attempt made upon them, that ought not to be excused.[47]

De Quincey is satirically using the concept of Aristotle's golden mean as a device through which to explain his argument: that when exploring that which is aesthetic it is equally important to look at acts that do not immediately appear within what is argued to be beauty. The golden mean lets us understand that there are two sides of every conception that must be brought to balance and that aesthetics is no different. The appreciation of the aesthetics of murder is necessary to challenge our understanding of that which is traditionally held as beauty. De Quincey acknowledges that this can be unpleasant but that does not make it any less necessary, rather his resistance to accepting murder as such stresses the point that he is making about such conceptions of aesthetics being a need that must be confronted and accepted. De Quincey's satirical proposal suggests, however uncomfortably, that the understanding of the aesthetics of murder is acceptable providing it is balanced.

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[47] Thomas De Quincey, (1839) "Second Paper On Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts" p82

The satire undercuts any suggestion of this being taken seriously here, but Poe's redefinition in "The Murders on the Rue Morgue*"* calls us to look at this without the satire. What offers the other side of the balance is the form of authoritarian dominance that is seen as being overt in the texts presented by Foucault and Knight. The reader of detective fiction is not a casual observer of the exploration of the imbalance between the ethical and the aesthetic but one who becomes immersed in it when s/he choose to access that fictional construct. Unlike De Quincey's society, which is only interested in murders that occur within the realm of reality, the reader of detective fiction seeks out a far greater number of possibilities in what is an ever growing genre. Black states:

> Taking our cue from the "Macbeth" essay, we begin to suspect that murder fascinated the romantic sensibility because it revealed new and totally unexpected insights into the nature of everyday ethical existence by offering a premonition of an aesthetic hyperreality that was altogether removed from natural and human law.[48]

Although De Quincey's example of Macbeth may offer an extreme of this hyperreality, it is not hard to see that Black makes a valid point by suggesting the romanticism that is at the heart of the detective text and the desire for a truth that is generated within the reader.

The situation of detective fiction may be hyperreal, and different generic developments have emphasised this, but it is the potentiality for variance in the search for truth that helps the detective reader to immerse themselves. This allows the psychological debate to be performed with the reader in the outsider position that is essential in order to

[48] Joel Black, (1991) The Aesthetics of Murder, p56

access both sides of the dialogue equally. The true experience of looking at a mirror and recognising only the self is the need to explore a mind but to realise at the denouement that that mind was the mind of the criminal. Readers recognise within themselves the delinquency that Foucault stressed as important to the way in which the genre has adapted to social change.

In "Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm," Carlo Ginzburg explores the method through which such a debate is brought about by looking at the comparable role of the detective and the analyst. Ginzburg's argument explores the work of Giovanni Morelli and the influence upon both Sigmund Freud and Arthur Conan Doyle.[49] The influence upon Freud is explicitly stated in "The Moses of Michaelangelo,"[50] but what Ginzburg points out for Doyle is the convergence of method. This method consists in the attention to minor details as the means to identify the individual, either in their work or their physical appearance. What Morelli refers to as marginal facts is close attention paid to minor artistic details attributable to the works of the artist concerned. For Freud the attention to the marginal data presented through dreams, linguistic slips or free association, offers psychoanalytic insight. With Doyle, Holmes' method of focusing upon the crime scene to construct the character of the criminal and the nature of the crime is also based on marginal facts. As Ginzburg states, each man being medically trained, this is an application of medical semiotics as a method for understanding.[51]

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[49] Carlo Ginzburg, (1986) "Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm"

[50] Sigmund Freud (1914*)* "The Moses of Michelangelo"

[51] This is something that has been explored in detail in relation to detective fiction by Ronald R. Thomas (1999) in Detective Fiction and the Rise of Forensic Science and

The detective and the analyst have obvious parallels in this methodological paradigm. Ginzburg focuses upon involuntary signs:

> Morelli set out to identify, within a culturally conditioned system of signs such as the pictorial, those which appeared to be involuntary, as is the case with symptoms (and the majority of clues). And in these involuntary signs, in the "material trifles"– a calligrapher might call them "flourishes"– comparable to "favourite words and phrases" which "most people introduce into their speaking and writing unintentionally, often without realising it," Morelli recognised the surest clue to an artist's identity.[52]

The involuntary sign is initially intended to be a non-associated element. Ginzburg proposes that with the correct attention from the correct individual, one whose knowledge of such unintended flourishes works within a system of signs, these marginal details can become the building blocks of a narrative that aspires to truth.

A feature of mankind's development is revealed as the process of hunting. As a central human drive to understanding, the semiotic process is presented in a wider context than simply the medical. A further specific dimension arises when applied to the detective and the analyst. As the one who is supposed to know, the specific hunt is central to the role

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Lawrence Frank (2003) in Victorian Detective Fiction and the Nature of Evidence who extend the frame of such scientific functions by illustrating a further parallel to the concurrent development of forensic science[51].

[52] Ginzburg, p118

each practitioner takes in their attempt to discover that which is at present hidden but needs to be defined by authority. This has an impact on the nature of narrative:

> This obviously undemonstrable hypothesis nevertheless seems to be reinforced by the fact that the rhetorical figures on which the language of venatic deduction still rests today- the part in relation to the whole, the effect in relation to the cause- are traceable to the narrative axis of metonymy, with the rigorous exclusion of metaphor.[53]

Such narratives revolve around rhetorical figures. There are parallels with the creation of language as a means for expressing the hunt that offers a correlation with other systems of reading such as the three that Ginzburg invokes: tracks, traces and pictograms.[54] Not least there is a semiotic element at work here, and central to this is the concept of metonymy.

It is here that Ginzburg stops in his discussion. Having drawn such a parallel he does not extend his argument to look at the full range of what he is presenting. In Ginzburg's model there is only the hunt and the solution, there is no real discussion about the dialogue that occurs within this process. If this is indeed a new phase in the process of human development, where the convergence of style allows for a unity of method, it is of interest to think about the human's position within this method, but Ginzburg fails to do this.

Slavoj Žižek also uses Doyle as a central focus for his analysis of detective fiction, pointing out that the great strength of the genre is the impossibility of linear plotting once

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[53] Ginzburg, p103

[54] Ginzburg, pp103-4

the crime has been committed.[55] This offers a parallel with the analyst as the narrative is defined by the belief that there is something to be known that, as Ginzburg expressed, must be constructed retrospectively from a process of analysing disassociated clues. Žižek sees the parallel here with the theories of Shklovsky and the double narrative that has a present construction story uncovering a past construction plot.

Žižek is aware of the figure of the detective as the one with the specialist knowledge who is the authority of the text. For Žižek this is problematic:

> It is, however, precisely this "infallibility" and "omniscience" of the detective that constitutes the stumbling block of the standard deprecatory theories of the detective novel: their aggressive dismissal of the detective's power betrays a perplexity, a fundamental incapacity to explain how it works and why it appears so "convincing" to the reader in spite of its indisputable "improbability".[56]

What Žižek reveals is the important issue that arises from the point that Ginzburg left out from his analysis: he never fully asks what is so appealing about this methodological paradigm that he has stated, why does human thought converge in this process? For Žižek this question is central to detective fiction as a genre, rather than it being a technical exercise. It is in this area that the parallel appeal of psychoanalysis offers the necessary insight.

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[55] Slavoj Žižek, (1992) "Two Ways to Avoid the Real of Desire." Pp48-9

[56] Žižek, p49

For his model Žižek draws upon Freud's concept of the dream-work, and in this he foregrounds the fact that in any such process there is the presupposition of there being something to be found. This presupposition in turn leads to the creation of two key terms within Žižek's analysis: the "place-holder of the lack"[57] and the "lure". Making the detective the "place-holder of the lack" defines her/him as "the point of the signifier's non-sense."[58] It is the role of "the place-holder of the lack" to "denature" the false image of society that the crime has created making her/him predisposed to the "lure" to find an interest in a particular case. The "lure" is a signifier that in the initial instance has no sense and the drive of the detective is to find sense for it. This means:

> With this we have arrived at the similarity between the procedure of the analyst and that of the detective: the scene of the crime with which the detective is confronted is also, as a rule, a false image put together by the murderer in order to efface the traces of his act. The scene's organic, natural quality is a lure, and the detective's task is to denature it by first discovering the inconspicuous details that stick out, that do not fit into the frame of the surface image.[59]

This is the same point made by Ginzburg except for a couple of subtle, but significant, differences. In Ginzburg the process is in the hinterland between science and fiction that medical semiotics represents. The detective/analyst used solely their greater learnt

[57] Žižek, p53

[58] Žižek, p53

[59] Žižek, p53

knowledge as the means to find and dictate their solution, a process that is defendable with Doyle's presentation of the process of Holmes, but it is not all. Here Žižek identifies the "organic" element as the falsity that disguises the true "lure", that aspect of the scene that does "not fit in". This corresponds with the accidental in Ginzburg but Žižek lays greater emphasis on the detective/analyst being drawn toward the true "lure", not by having greater knowledge, but by means that are less definable. Such instances would be the sense of the dislocated characteristic of an object, an area that Ginzburg only hints at in his parallel.

Lures are defined by distinct roles that Žižek calls true and false lures. Where the detective and psychoanalyst converge, the false lures, which lead to false solutions, are key areas. What distinguishes the Holmes figure from Watson or the Police is the ability to see how false lures are designed to create a false trail of narrative, how they lack that degree of true narrative relevance even though they are dislocated in the realm of the crime scene. A process of the dialogic is at work as the false lures are solely for the aesthetic purpose of the criminal. False lures are the red herring which, although ultimately disappointing, from a narrative point of view are exciting in their process of confusion and elaborate construction. The true lures are those that are transformed into the authoritative and ethical concluding narrative that the detective is able to offer as a solution by transforming them.

In Žižek's analysis this dialogic aspect is a feature of the detective only, not of the reader, who is meant to simply admire the dialogue in a Watson like manner. In

discussion concerning the notion of the detective as the "subject supposed to know"[60] Žižek offers a different conclusion to Ginzburg:

> Herein lies the fundamental untruth, the existential falsity of the detective's "solution": the detective plays upon the difference between the factual truth (the accuracy of facts) and the "inner" truth concerning our desire. On behalf of the accuracy of facts, he compromises the "inner," libidinal truth and discharges us of all guilt for the realisation of our desire, insofar as this realisation is imputed to the culprit alone.[61]

The experience of the position of the reader is centred in the focus upon the detective as a figure who deals with the concepts of desire and guilt. In Ginzburg the seeker of truth is the detective alone. Here the detective is a facilitator of desire in a position to remove guilt. The detective facilitates mediation between that authority of the law and the guilt of the crime by realising the reader's desire and removing her/him from the realm of guilt. The detective facilitates the compromise between the ethical and the aesthetic.

For Žižek this breaks down the connection between the Detective and the Psychoanalyst as the latter in reality makes us face up to the cost of those desires. This is because, although Žižek recognises the reader as the person experiencing, it is through a dictatorial process in which the detective is the one who experiences the dialogic process.

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[60] Žižek, p57

[61] Žižek, p59

The reader in Žižek's model is simply a Watson figure which does not explain the enjoyment element. Žižek limits this to the "objective" classical detective on the Holmesian model; the external figure who treats the mystery as no more than another problem to be solved. In the Hard-Boiled school Žižek finds a greater connection as the detective is placing their desire at risk in the process of investigation which is more subjective. In such narrative the cost of desire is more explicit as readers experience the detective paying the costs rather than expiating them as in the Holmesian form of narrative.

Žižek's conclusion, much like that of Ginzburg, seems to not go far enough in explaining the role of the reader in this experience. At no point is there any suggestion of dialogue at play within the reader in either of these readings, rather the explanation of the process of analysis seems far more systematic and objective and solely the domain of the detective her/himself. Žižek appears aware that in analysis the role of the analysand offers a third dimension to the analyst and the dream work, the location of the actual desire that s/he must be faced with, yet when focusing on the detective he does not view the reader as sharing a similar relationship to the crime work. By not exploring such a connection Žižek is losing sight of the central appeal that readers find in the genre. Central to what Barthes calls the jouissance of the reading experience and of which the reader of detective fiction has experience, is this connection, this aspect of becoming a focal point of desire.

Alexander N. Howe has developed this from Žižek.[62] Howe argues that because the analyst refuses an interpretation that offers a unified narrative, the classical school cannot support the analysis of the detective as analyst, because there the detective must strive for a unified narrative. Howe argues that the detective and analyst are both in search of the intent

[62] Alexander N. Howe, (2008) "*Reading the Detective and the Analyst* Encore!".

but that in the detective's case this will always be framed by a deliberate motive. For the analyst that intent may never be resolved in such clear cut ways, in fact such resolutions are impossible. Howe points out that in the Lacanian reading of "The Purloined Letter" the ultimate meaning of the letter is never revealed. The unification from the identification of deliberate motive is removed from the conclusion such as Poe presents. This form of narrative raises the question as to where the motivation lies.

Žižek argued that why the detective fiction reader differs from the analysand is because the former is given a solution that leads to the satisfying conclusion of their crisis of desire and guilt, whilst the analysand is left with only a confrontation of aspects of their desires that need a further process of interpretation. We will not here look at the sociological psychology of the detective reader, but a focus on the process of repetition must always be paramount in any discussion of reading in this genre. The detective reader is no more cured from their desires than the analysand. The reading of one detective text is like the reading of one dream, the analysing process of which allows for a temporary insight that needs a larger repeated process to occur. Such is the presence of repetition within the genre's success that the majority of its prominent authors have written narrative series allowing the reader to experience a close repetition to the initial experience in multiple instances.

Robert A. Rushing has written about repetition in relation to Žižek in Resisting Arrest[63] where he does explore the position of the reader within this process. Rushing identifies the need to repeat, in both the detective and the reader, as being akin to irritation. Readers are irritated by that which does not seem to fit and, like the detective, must repeat

[63] Robert A. Rushing (2007) Resisting Arrest: Detective Fiction and Popular Culture

the process until they have uncovered the cause of the irritation. It is in this irritation that Rushing locates the real of desire: "Detective fiction, in addition to being a genre of misdirected, misidentified, and misrecognised *desire*, is also quintessentially a genre of *enjoyment.*"[64]Repetition, even as an irritant, is central to the reading process in creating this enjoyment.

Rushing is aware of the fact that this opens up a whole area of analysis when thinking about the nature of how and why this form of "*enjoyment*" is so desirable to the reader:

> In this sense, "enjoying one's symptoms," as Žižek says, becomes a perversely anti-authoritarian way of reading. It is a deliberate embrace of what is ostensibly bad for you, and, as such, brings you closer to a recognition of the operations of *drive*, your own self-destructive impulses: what Freud called the death drive.[65]

The issue of drive is important here. By locating the drive for "*enjoyment*" as central to the reading process Rushing raises a question about the whole purpose of reading into which the analysis of detective fiction can give insight to.

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[64]Rushing, p9

[65] Rushing, p11

CHAPTER TWO: AUDEN, FREUD AND GUILT

Of course they called on God, but he went his way

down among the lost people like Dante, down

to the stinking fosse where the injured

lead the ugly life of the rejected,

and showed us what evil is, not, as we thought,

deeds that must be punished, but our lack of faith,

our dishonest mood of denial,

the concupiscence of the oppressor.[66]

In "The Guilty Vicarage,"[67] it was W. H. Auden's intention to explore the reasons why the reading of classical detective stories, in particular of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie, was felt to be an enjoyable and worthwhile pastime. He defined the essential features of these stories: small communities involved in a complex puzzle plot revolving around the crime of murder until the detective, most commonly an outsider,

[66] W. H. Auden, (1939) "In Memory of Sigmund Freud", from Collected Poems

[67] W. H. Auden, (1948) "The Guilty Vicarage"

comes forth to solve the puzzle and apportion blame upon the correct individual. His argument was that for a murder to occur in this genre, what was necessary was: "A closed society so that the possibility of an outside murderer (and hence of the society being totally innocent) is excluded; and a closely related society so that all members are potentially suspect."[68] Central to the construction of the text is the potential for a situation where guilt becomes the dominant characteristic of the participants:

> The interest in the study of a murderer is the observation, by the innocent many, of the sufferings of the guilty one. The interest in the detective story is the dialectic of innocence and guilt.[69]

In terms of the genre's construction, the nature of these suspects in relation to the society within which they are placed creates a disruption that is felt through all characters but also within the reader. The dialectic arises as a result of the innate doubt that exists in the society as to the location of the guilt; such observation is wanted in order to initiate the "suffering" but the individuals are aware that the figure to be subjected to such "suffering" has yet to be identified and could potentially be anyone. There is the incipient sense in the reader that it could equally be the case that as a society member their own position has the potential of being observed as a guilty party upon whom "suffering" must be meted out and their actions will be open to question accordingly. This creates an interest that arises from identification:

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[68] Auden, p17

[69] Auden, p16

> The suspects must be guilty of something, because, now that the aesthetic and the ethical are in opposition, if they are completely innocent (obedient to the ethical) they lose their aesthetic interest and the reader will ignore them.[70]

Auden is reiterating what was discussed in De Quincey and Poe, that the reader assumes the role of spectator to the dialogue between the ethical and the aesthetic, although Auden is redefining the nature of this appreciation. On the one hand the reader enjoys the guilt that is expressed by the characters; on the other the reader is simultaneously awaiting the restoration of the law by the assertion of the ethical dimension.

Auden's analysis anticipates what Rushing[71] refers to as the uncomfortable enjoyment that arises through the sense of repetition by stating such identification with guilt as both aesthetically pleasurable whilst also ethically concerning. For Auden there is never a sense of reading a detective text without there being a sense of guilt:

> I can, to some degree, resist yielding to these or similar desires which tempt me, but I cannot prevent myself from having them to resist; and it is the fact that I have them which makes me feel guilty, so that instead of dreaming about indulging my desires, I dream about the removal of the guilt which I feel at their existence. This I still do, and must do, because guilt is a subjective feeling where any further step is

[70] Auden, p20

[71] Robert A. Rushing, (2007) Resisting Arrest: Detective Fiction and Popular Culture

> only a reduplication- feeling guilty about guilt. I suspect that the typical reader of detective stories is, like myself, a person who suffers from a sense of sin.[72]

Auden's "sense of sin" is comparable to Rushing's "irritant," the identified awareness of displeasure in the process that must be endured in order to find the true enjoyment. The detective text is the narrative of a process of understanding a sense of guilt, but that guilt must first be accepted. The reduplication offers a threat that must be challenged. It is about "desires," there is something about the construction that "tempts", and which he must "resist". The latter is the "subjective" level that involves the reader on a personal basis and it is this that is essential to the genre's success.

Guilt is qualified in Auden's view as being specifically sinful. This strengthens the purpose to read as there is the will to explore both the capacity for this activity as well as the need to see the correction of such. For Auden the relation between sin and guilt is complex: "To have a sense of sin means to feel guilty at there being an ethical choice to make, a guilt which, however 'good' I may become, remains unchanged."[73] It is central to Auden's understanding that the process is not to remove guilt or the "sense of sin" but rather for readers to define themselves in relation to it in terms of "choice." Although he only here refers to the "ethical" side of that "choice" it is possible to posit that the aesthetic is the alternate to that "ethical choice".

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[72] W. H. Auden, (1948) "The Guilty Vicarage", p23

[73] Auden, p23

Auden states that the perfect society in which murder occurs "should be the Great Good Place; for the more Eden-like it is, the greater the contradiction of murder."[74] As the spectator of the dialogue between the aesthetic and the ethical it is important that readers are presented with a locale that offers little further distraction so that they can assign the proper emphasis to their reactions. An Eden-like society is one that aspires to a state of innocence as it is defined pre-fall, and more so pre- the slaying of Abel by Cain. Eden is a conceptual place where murder cannot exist and can never have existed. The reader is aware that s/he has lost Eden already and that any attainment of a sense of innocence will only be temporary before the cycle must inevitably start again. As with Sayers, Auden is aware of the classical antecedents for detective narrative forms: "As in the Aristotelian description of tragedy, there is Concealment (the innocent seem guilty and the guilty seem innocent) and Manifestation (the real guilt is brought to consciousness)."[75] A sense of chaos elicits within the characters a need to redefine that which is concealed, to manifest the truth that needs to be known. The redefinition of each character in relation to the difference between their guilt and that which is concealed is central to the text in hand. It is in this dialogue that the role of the reader becomes the dominant area of interest concerning the genre. Here has arisen a sense of intrigue within the personal reasons for concealment and the reader must necessitate the desired manifestation of those reasons in order to facilitate a pleasurable conclusion.

Auden explains that the "Milieu (Natural)" of detective fiction should "reflect its human inhabitants": "The corpse must shock not only because it is a corpse but also

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[74] Auden, p19

[75] Auden, p16

because, even for a corpse, it is shockingly out of place, as when a dog makes a mess on a drawing room carpet."[76] Such a reflection extends beyond the inhabitants that are presented within the narrative world through to the position of the readers who are equally immersed in this society during the process of reading. Readers recognise that the ethical and aesthetic concerns, the choices made, within which this society exists, are those of themselves. A significant catalyst for this is the identity of the victim:

> He has to involve everyone in suspicion, which requires that he be a bad character; and he has to make everyone feel guilty, which requires that he be a good character. He cannot be a criminal because he could then be dealt with by the law and murder would be unnecessary.[77]

The victim traverses a fine line between being a figure who is bad but also one who must, importantly, elicit guilt. It is a distinction for the purposes of the reader's identification that Auden identifies the difference between "bad" and "criminal." If the figure is overtly criminal it negates the reader's response as s/he is unwilling to identify such an extreme character's death as being anything other than wholly just. Bad, in the sense of the potentiality that such an indication suggests, presents a proto-position to which the reader can relate. This is a situation that a normal person has arrived at due to a lack of imagination considering alternatives. The corpse has to become disturbing to the society where it belongs, to a point where that guilt is relocated within the individual who has

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[76] Auden, p19

[77] Auden, p19

committed the murder, but also to a lesser degree to all who could see reason to remove this "bad" element of society.

For Freud the explanation of guilt is as follows:

> To begin with, if we ask how a person comes to have a sense of guilt, we arrive at an answer which cannot be disputed: a person feels guilty (devout people would say "sinful") when he has done something which he knows to be "bad". But then we notice how little this answer tells us. Perhaps, after some hesitation, we shall add that even when a person has not actually *done* the bad thing but has only recognised in himself an *intention* to do it, he may regard himself as guilty; and the question then arises of why the intention is regarded as equal to the deed. [78]

Freud's language echoes the sentiment expressed by Auden: the definition that guilt is "sinful"; the awareness of having done something "bad". From Freud what can be extended from Auden's perception is the understanding that readers are testing their sense of guilt by looking at the "*intention*" toward the "bad" thing that makes them feel this sense of guilt. For the reader of detective fiction this suggests that the enjoyment is a positioning of him/herself in the place of the criminal in order to explore how s/he would feel in that situation. The fact that the reader feels guilty is a source of comfort, the strange enjoyment noted by Rushing. Readers are aware that they would not be successful in committing that crime in actuality but place themselves in the mind of the criminal to explore those

[78] Sigmund Freud, (1930) Civilisation and its Discontents, p124

motivations and allow for a dialogue between the moral conscience of the criminal and their own. Auden's conception of the detective fiction reader being someone who "suffers from a sense of sin" indicates that such readers have a morality that is strongly ingrained to allow for such dialogues to occur.

Freud argues this same point in the extension of his argument:

> Both cases, however, presuppose that one had already recognised that what is bad is reprehensible, is something that must not be carried out. How is this judgement arrived at? We may reject the existence of an original, as it were, natural, capacity to distinguish good from bad. What is bad is often not at all what is injurious or dangerous to the ego; on the contrary, it may be something which is desirable and enjoyable to the ego. Here, therefore, there is an extraneous influence at work, and it is this that decides what is to be called good or bad. [79]

Freud's description echoes Auden's of the nature of the suspect, and by extension the reader. What is good coincides with Auden's perception of the ethical choice as that which makes the reader aware of their guilt. It is such "extraneous influence" that is the means through which the dialogue between the ethical and the aesthetic becomes apparent. The aesthetic dimension that Auden had noted, of the reader's interest in the "bad" nature of the events in the crime work offering a unique appeal, reflects De Quincey. For Auden this is recognised as bad through some other process that is facilitated by the reader's desire. It is

[79] Freud, p124

a desire to understand the difference between bad and good, Auden's choice, but what is more, by allowing opportunities to have such experiences of desire, the reader is developing the autonomy that Auden expressed as the purpose of such a motivation.

The question arises as to how could any such process of relocation occur in a society where all feel a sense of this universal guilt? What becomes significant to Auden is that a peculiar characteristic of the corpse must be that s/he calls forth the unique authority of the detective. The conventional authority of the law has already been superseded by the "bad" figure who has cast her/himself as being outside of this society. It becomes necessary to find a comparable figure that will draw the reader's desire to observe. In other words the detective becomes a facilitator of the desire that Auden has stated as being central to such narratives. Auden identifies that "the best victim is the negative Father or Mother image,"[80] in connection with the psychoanalytical work of Sigmund Freud. Central to Freud's work is the understanding of the primal scene, a central moment of psychoanalytical crisis from which following events have their root. A feature of the primal scene is the subject's relation to their parents and Auden suggests that such evocation of Freudian conceptions of the subject's psychoanalytical crisis can allow for the unique identification of the location of guilt in these circumstances as well as offer a template for the type of figure who could be called upon to understand such events. To focus specifically on Auden's language here: he is not stating that detective fiction is so reductive as to always rely upon a child killing the parent, it is the parental "image" and the realm of possibility of suspicion is still open to the widest interpretation. In such a situation a figure with a singular set of skills is needed.

[80] W. H. Auden, (1948) "The Guilty Vicarage", p19

Lawrence Frank has argued[81] that the detective is her/himself a specific kind of historian. The crime committed is an historical event but one that exists in a society where the actual ability to reconstruct that event has been disrupted. The detective must become the historian by reconstructing the primary evidence of the crime. The processes put to work here are akin to those of the scientific practitioner, as Frank and also Ronald R. Thomas[82] have argued, extending the arguments of Ginzburg and the focus upon medical semiotics. The similarity to Ginzburg further emphasises that what Frank sees as a specific type of historian is one that has a particular psychological insight, that the detective must be a form of analyst. It comes as no surprise to find that this is not far removed from Auden's own understanding of psychoanalysis.

In the essay "The History of an Historian"[83] Auden identified that the difficulty that is found in the role of both the historian and the psychoanalyst is that they are caught in a realm where they have neither the authority of the natural scientist nor the pure subjectivity of fiction. What is presented must be seen to be truth but may have been achieved through non-scientific, subjective leaps of significance. The detective of the real world will often find themselves in this situation, but then so must the author of a detective text. A detective text must work within a construction of the world like the "Eden" which Auden suggested, and the possibility for crime that is presented must be reflected against a projected innocent potential for restoration. The fictional detective may use subjective methods to reach a conclusion, like Poirot relaxing in his armchair to the realm of his "little grey cells", or

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[81] Lawrence Frank, (2003) Victorian Detective Fiction and the Nature of Evidence

[82] Ronald R. Thomas, (1999) Detective Fiction and the Rise of Forensic Science

[83] W. H. Auden, (1955) "The History of the Historian", p597.

Holmes' recourse to his "seven per cent solution", but the conclusion s/he reach must fit with the "facts" of the fictional world presented or the reading experience would not be satisfying for the reader as an explanation of guilt.

This is the same for the historian/analyst who must accept they are working with a created world. As Auden states in "The Greatness of Freud" when comparing Freud's method to the historian:

> For the historical world is a horrid place where, instead of nice clean measurable forces, there are messy things like mixed motives, where classes keep overlapping, where what is believed to have happened is as real as what actually happened, a world, moreover, which cannot be defined by technical terms but only described by analogies.[84]

This is the world of the detective. It is the detective's role, in the construction of the crime narrative, to outline an analogy that is not the crime itself but parallel to it and imbued with the same ethical significance to the society of guilt to which it is presented. The appeal of detective fiction to the reader is the need for knowledge, as with the historian/analyst, that is central to the purpose of reading: "The driving force behind this daydream is the feeling of guilt, the cause of which is unknown to the dreamer." [85] To reconstruct the circumstances of this guilt analogously, as the historian/analyst constructs the past, allows for an understanding of such motivations.

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[84] W. H. Auden, (1953) "The Greatness of Freud", pp386-7

[85] W. H. Auden, (1948) "The Guilty Vicarage" p24

Auden uses the term "daydream" offering a further parallel to Freud. Freud's lecture "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming" illustrates an awareness of a connection between the literary process and that of the "daydream," as well as more wide ranging opinions concerning enjoyment that are comparable with Auden's conclusions. For Freud the child at play performs like a creative writer and it is their total immersion that defines this as play rather than the adult, less connected, form of the same which he refers to as "phantasy". A further distinction is clear in the following: "The adult, on the contrary, is ashamed of his phantasies and hides them from other people. He cherishes his phantasies as his most intimate possessions, and as a rule he would rather confess his misdeeds than tell anyone his phantasies."[86] Although Freud never states so explicitly, there is a connection here to what he states about phantasies and the language that Auden uses in order to express his liking for detective fiction. Auden even refers to the ambition of the detective fiction reader as being one that will return the reader to "fantasy". Freud is alluding to an activity in the life of the adult that is pleasurable but one that has connotations of guilt to the extent that other lesser "misdeeds" would be more admissible.

The reference to "fantasy" in "The Guilty Vicarage" is used to state that detective fiction is caught in an unattainable aspiration. It is in this conclusion that Auden's text has been seen as a negative critique of the genre. But when placed within the context of Auden's larger beliefs it becomes redefined:

[86] Sigmund Freud, (1908) "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming" p145

> The fantasy, then, which the detective story addict indulges is the fantasy of being restored to the Garden of Eden, to a state of innocence, where they may know love as love and not as the law.[87]

Following Freud the "fantasy" is not concerned with the artistic rather: "The motive forces of phantasies are unsatisfied wishes, and every single phantasy is the fulfilment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality."[88] Whilst readers are aware that such an aspiration is ultimately fantastical, it is the enactment of the process that is important.

The effect of desire in fantasy simulates acts that readers would otherwise find morally reprehensible: a murder in actuality would be something that readers would find abhorrent as an act, as De Quincey opined; but in the safe context of a literary work readers can explore this desire as they know it is confined to an expression of language. The term "daydream" is appropriate: a "daydream" has the function of the dream work whilst simultaneously being a conscious, waking event that has the attributes of being consciously willed. The "daydream" is an aspect of voluntary desire being made manifest in order to fulfil the wished-for restoration to Eden.

Freud identifies a further aspect of the nature of "phantasies" that is important to the understanding of the detective fiction reader: "They fit themselves in to the subject's shifting impressions of life, change with every change in his situation, and receive from every fresh active impression what might be called a 'date-mark'".[89] Auden states that once

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[87] W. H. Auden, (1948) "The Guilty Vicarage", p24

[88] Sigmund Freud, (1908) "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming" p146

[89] Freud, p147

read he cannot return to a detective text, but that equally he is compelled to read a further text in the same genre. What Freud sees as the "date-mark" of the "phantasy" explains such behaviour and offers an insight as to why the features of repetition and divergence are central to the genre. Auden uses the term "addict" for the detective fiction reader, but taking Freud's description of the fantasist, it seems that a singular aspect of that fantasy has been satisfied only for the "impressions of life" to "shift" and necessitate a new variation of the fantasy. Each new text, whilst similar to the previous experience, offers a "fresh active impression" that gives the belief of the shift in the reader's general life, even though such a shift may be in reality, and textually, marginally small. The detective reader is compelled to repeat the experience, like the "addict", as the sensation of satisfaction has only been fleeting and desire has reasserted itself.

The compulsion to repeat the fantasy is connected to guilt as the expiation is only temporary and partial with each reading. As Auden concludes:

> The magic formula is an innocence which is discovered to contain guilt; then a suspicion of being the guilty other has been expelled, a cure effected, not by me or my neighbours, but by the miraculous intervention of a genius from outside who removes guilt by giving knowledge of guilt.[90]

The detective facilitates a temporary cure for the sense of guilt that is uncovered through the reading of such texts. There is an expulsion of the guilt through the detective's knowledge. For Freud there was the following speculation: "It may even be that not a little

[90] W. H. Auden, (1948) "The Guilty Vicarage" p24

of this effect is due to the writer's enabling us thenceforward to enjoy our own day-dreams without self-reproach or shame."[91] The key word is "enabling" as this is something that the reader comes to take possession of. Freud acknowledged that for such a speculation to be proven it would need further exploration.

Central is the issue of using allegory and analogy as the means of the reader drawing comparison with the textual criminal. Whereas the former is concerned with the wholly figurative, the latter has a greater sense of connectivity and it is illustrative of the process of the detective, the analyst and the historian that they must facilitate a transition from one to the other. In the first instance a supposition based upon the inherent sense of displacement must be posited as allegory that seeks to become more analogous once further clues and evidence are brought into the sense of certainty. This is problematic as it suggests that the reader must seek to find a greater connectivity with criminality through the reading process whilst equally being aware that the composite being created is distinct from themselves and capable of being separated from them at the denouement.

In the text On Dreams[92]Freud discusses his issue with such: "'collective' and 'composite figures' and strange 'composite structures'". This leads to the concept of x. Freud argues that in the composite structures of dreams:

> Their strangeness disappears completely when once we have made up our minds not to class them with objects of our waking perception, but to remember that they are products of dream-condensation and are emphasising in an effectively abbreviated

[91] Sigmund Freud, (1908) "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming" p153

[92] Sigmund Freud, (1901) On Dreams p651

> form some common characteristic of the objects which they are thus combining. Here again the common element has as a rule to be discovered by analysis. The content of the dream merely says as it were: "All these things have an element of x in common." The dissection of these composite structures by means of analysis is often the shortest way to finding the meaning of a dream.[93]

The detective offers a similar form of dissection within the detective text, though s/he is not acting alone. In Freud's description the element of x is something that is present within a text that two readers are exploring, the detective as the functionary, the analyst, but also the analysand to whom these composite structures offer a different level of reading, a more emotive one, a reading that is closely linked to the moral conscience. Where the term x is useful is that it offers the indefinable and multi-variance that such texts must have the potential to present. The dream-work, like the detective text, may have the same generic form that allows for a process that can be repeatable in the reading of any such text of its type, but the internal stylistic features are always going to work on a completely unique level in order to allow for the difference that such a genre dictates. It is a concern of Freud's that there must be an awareness of how the condensation that is an elemental factor to the dream-work's construction can still allow for the conveyance of meaning that can be arrived at through the analysis of the dream. In this Freud identifies that "the common element in them then stands out clearly in the composite picture, while contradictory details more or less wipe one another out."[94] Condensation is a key technique in detective fiction,

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[93] Freud, p651

[94] Freud, p649

and like Freud the reader comes to realise that it is through the nature of identifying areas in these "composite pictures", those points of commonality, that such condensation can be utilised as a means to offer a location of meaning.

This is reinforced by Freud's extension of this discussion:

> In analysing a dream, if an uncertainty can be resolved into an "either-or" we must replace it for purposes of interpretation by an "and", and take each of the apparent alternatives as an independent starting point for a series of associations.[95]

This image of the transformation of the process in the dream-work is comparable with that outlined by Auden describing the role of the "law-for" with the historian, looking at the historical event:

> Of the motive for choosing to occur with which a Law-for provides an historical event, it may be said that it is good or evil, of the choice itself that it is right or wrong. A just law is one which provokes good motives, not one which compels right choices.[96]

The choices that are "right" in terms of the law-for are those recognised by the reader's moral conscience at the point of the historical event, that point where the commonality of the ethical and the aesthetic occurs. There is the need, at these moments where the

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[95] Freud, p650

[96] W. H. Auden, (1949) "Nature, History and Poetry" pp226-7.

commonality creates the uncertainty that splits into "either-or," to allow this to lead the reader into the next progression of the analytical process. Where Auden offered a simple moral unifying conclusion, of good or evil, Freud is aware that these historical events are more complicated and open to variance. The desire for x is in the divergence rooted in this transformation to "and". That such a construction as the dream-work, and by extension the detective work, necessitates the reader to take this further step, is central to the importance of divergence in the genre. The choice is not the simple unifying moral of Auden's "law-for" as the desire for x does not work on the level of such simplistic absolutes. The desire for x remains indefinable by any other term because it will always be singular to the experience of the reader at that point.

Freud qualifies this by explaining the dreamer's sense of being in relation to such moments in the dream-work: "the sensation of *inhibition of movement* which is so common in dreams also serves to express a contradiction between two impulses, a *conflict of will.*"[97] This "*conflict of will*" at the expression of the "contradiction between two impulses" is the awareness of the presence of both the aesthetic and the ethical. The dreamer is aware of the need to find the commonality of these, but equally aware that to find a coinherence that would be satisfying would cause an "*inhibition of movement*". It would not be an *"inhibition of movement*" that would actually arise from the commonality but rather a "*negation of movement*" in that it would be a conclusion that stops the forward momentum that the "*conflict of will*" desires. It is the "*conflict of will*" that has necessitated the transformation of the "either-or" into "and". The realisation that the dreamer feels any sense of "*inhibition*" is in itself that which makes the dreamer feel the need to move. It is

[97] Sigmund Freud, (1901) On Dreams p651

the disturbance to the text, the realisation of the condensation and destabilisation that searches for that which will offer the greater satisfaction.

Through this process the reader creates the "and" that will allow forward movement into the next process of the investigation:

> If a common element of this kind between the dream-thoughts is not present, the dream-work sets about *creating* one, so that it may be possible for the thoughts to be given a common representation in the dream. The most convenient way of bringing together two dream-thoughts which, to start with, have nothing in common, is to alter the verbal form of one of them, and thus bring it half-way to meet the other, which may be similarly clothed in a new form of words.[98]

To find the commonality there is an altering of the "verbal form", a change to the way that the language is presented in order to make the person looking up the image find a greater awareness of the way in which that image can be understood. There is the awareness of a three party structure of understanding: the initial image, the viewer, and the transformed image that arises through the process of the first image transforming, to elucidate an understanding that the viewer did not originally have, through revelation of that which was not previously known, to create commonality. The role of the detective/analyst is being evoked as a facilitator of this understanding by being the functionary who identifies those points of commonality. This allows for an understanding to be found that initiates a progression onto the next motif. There is awareness in the reader that the commonality

[98] Freud, p650

identified is where the omission has occurred, the "verbal form" is altered with the intention of being able now to express itself without such omission.

Like the dream-work, the detective must find a "composite-idea" that allows for an understanding of the situation as it is presented that may facilitate an ultimate moment of commonality. As Freud states, the dream thoughts "represent foreground and background, conditions, digressions and illustrations, chains of evidence and counter-arguments"[99], they are never of themselves singularly points of meaning, but are the necessary component parts that are needed if a sense of meaning is to be achieved. The dream-thoughts are the clues, those points that suggest there is something that is hidden that needs to be known. They are the component parts that create a reaction within the moral conscience, the sense of a present absence that facilitates within the reader a feeling of guilt being present in the society that is described.

Freud states of dream thoughts: "They are not clothed in the prosaic language usually employed by our thoughts, but they are on the contrary represented symbolically by means of similes and metaphors, in images of those resembling poetic speech."[100] Each of the individual thoughts is a simile or metaphor of itself. It is the case that two things that cannot be understood as distinct entities are brought together in the form of commonality, of redefinition in the light of each other. This description, as so far presented, is a rather simplistic one. Freud states that dream-thought can of itself be made of a number of dream elements that are in themselves complex and potentially intertwined and contradictory. It is the same in the detective text. A clue that may eventually become the most important piece

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[99] Freud, p660

[100] Freud, p659

of evidence for the solution, once a number of other diverse events or revelations have occurred, may not be recognised as such until the more complex dimensions of what will allow it to have the commonality of x are discovered. The clue would be ignored for a significant amount of time. Freud states:

> We assume as a matter of course that the most distinct element in the manifest content of a dream is the most important one; but in fact [owing to the displacement that has occurred] it is often an *indistinct* element which turns out to be the most direct derivative of the essential dream-thought.[101]

The detective text is working in a disrupted world, or to put it in other terms, a displaced world. If the sense of the society's true meaning has been displaced then it is of no surprise that it is in the displaced areas, the margins of Ginzburg's analysis, where readers should expect to look for those elements that need to be brought into their analysis in order to achieve the desired commonality of x.

It is the role of the historian, the analyst and the detective to work within parallel structures as the dream work. All three are concerned with a disrupted collection of evidence, fragmented and frequently contradictory; the singular core of the methodology that must be applied is that which Freud expresses. The desire of the investigation is the desire for x, the point at which there is a commonality of the meaning that these disparate elements present. It is through this coinherence that readers are allowed to progress onto the

[101] Freud, p654

next stage of understanding, that point of x which is common to the desire to search for truth.

Although it seems contradictory that it would be desirous, the process of readers defining themselves in relation to the textual criminal, a representation of the negative of desire, leads to a greater understanding of the truth of self. This desired motivation is concerned with how readers differ from the textual criminal even at the points where they recognise that there are great similarities. Freud argues:

> Since a person's own feelings would not have led him along this path, he must have had a motive for submitting to this extraneous influence. Such a motive is easily discovered in his helplessness and his dependence on other people, and it can best be designated as a fear of loss of love. If he loses the love of another person upon whom he is dependent, he also ceases to be protected from a variety of dangers. Above all, he is exposed to the danger that this stronger person will show his superiority in the form of punishment. At the beginning, therefore, what is bad is whatever causes one to be threatened with loss of love.[102]

There are three important issues here: firstly, in detective fiction the text is structured around suspicion and therefore the loss of an unconditional love. In the text, once the crime has been committed everyone suspects everyone else of being the potential criminal, a negation of the state Freud describes: "Against all the evidence of his senses, a man who is

[102]Sigmund Freud, (1930) Civilisation and its Discontents p124

in love declares "I" and "you" are one, and is prepared to behave as if it were fact."[103] There can be no love in the context of the investigation process of detective fiction as the characters are in a state that is hyperconscious of their senses as a means of projecting either their own innocence or guilt, or of suspecting the same in others. A perfect illustration of this is Wilkie Collins' novel The Moonstone[104] where the central romantic storyline of Franklin Blake and Rachel Verinder is suspended in a state of unspoken, unconscious, conflict for the period of the mystery's existence because each one feels a guilt that they cannot explain but which excludes the full expression of love. Auden was also aware of the incompatibility of love and investigation in his statement linking detective fiction to the Eden state. Auden extended this state beyond that of the characters to the state that readers find themselves in, readers too want this restoration of "love as love" as opposed to "law".

The second factor of Freud's argument is the awareness of punishment as a function of the law's presence in the world. The presence of the stronger person, or entity, that can punish is suggestive of the role of the detective figure: a figure that is both feared and desired simultaneously. If the reader is placed in the position of guilt because s/he is exploring their potential *intention,* then the potential punishment is also something that s/he would fear, as s/he has transposed her/himself into the one whose guilt will elicit the punishment in hand. What Auden raises, and Freud supports this, is that the detective serves to provide both law and love, and acceptance of this punishment is the means to remove both the guilt *and* the function of the law by returning to a state of unconditional

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[103] Freud, p66

[104] Wilkie Collins, (1868) The Moonstone

love. It is not that guilt is removed; rather it is that the reader has come to understand that in such circumstances s/he is right to feel guilty and have the capacity to self-punish accordingly.

This leads to the third element: "Such a motive is easily discovered in his helplessness."[105] Freud's position of the state of being helpless in the development of humanity has close parallels with the position of the reader in Auden's model:

> But man's helplessness remains and along with it his longing for his father, and the gods. The gods retain their threefold task: they must exorcise the terrors of nature, they must reconcile men to the cruelty of Fate, particularly as it is shown in death, and they must compensate them for the sufferings and privations which a civilised life in common has imposed on them.[106]

This three-part model outlines a three-part function that is present within the nature of the detective: "exorcising the terrors of nature" suggests the need to solve the crime, the guilt, and punish those who need that punishment. The compensation "for the sufferings" is the restoration of the sense of love, the return to Eden. What is interesting is the middle element, to "reconcile men to the cruelty of fate," as this is neither of the more absolute moral positions but simultaneously tied to them both. This is the role in the act of reading detective fiction that can be characterised as the "daydream": it is the self-willed process of interacting with the work as a dream work as the analyst may do.

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[105] Freud, p124

[106] Sigmund Freud, (1927) The Future of An Illusion pp17-18

There is particular interest in the position in which the reader finds her/himself with relation to the detective in the earlier parts of the text:

> The sense of guilt, the harshness of the super-ego, is thus the same thing as the severity of the conscience. It is the perception which the ego has of being watched over in this way, the assessment of the tension between its own strivings and the demands of the super-ego. The fear of this critical agency (a fear which is at the bottom of the whole relationship), the need for punishment, is an instinctual manifestation on the part of the ego, which has become masochistic under the influence of a sadistic super-ego; it is a portion, that is to say, of the instinct towards internal destruction present in the ego, employed for forming an erotic attachment to the super-ego.[107]

In the reading process the detective takes the position of the super-ego. The reader identifies the sense of guilt by placing her/himself in a comparable context to the suspect, yet the detective is supplementary, outside this realm of society's characterisation, an unknowable force except as a threat to the person on whom rests the location of guilt which at that point contains the reader. S/he is the centre of the dominant capacity to punish and must be seen as an equal antagonist to that presented by the criminal.

This raises two factors in this relationship: the first of these is the fact that this conflict between ego and super-ego, the sense of guilt and the punishment of guilt, produces a third

[107]Sigmund Freud, (1930) Civilisation and its Discontents p136

state that is not part of either but is the crux of the relationship: the moral conscience. This is how Freud describes the role of moral conscience:

> We ought not to speak of a conscience until a super-ego is demonstrably present. As to a sense of guilt, we must admit that it is in existence before the super-ego, and therefore before conscience, too. At that time it is the immediate expression of fear of the external authority, recognition of the tension between the ego and that authority. It is the direct derivative of the conflict between the need for the authority's love and the urge towards instinctual satisfaction, whose inhibition produces the inclination to aggression.[108]

The moral conscience is not the function of the super-ego but it is something that derives from the super-ego's influence. Further it is not a part of the ego but something that arises from the presence of guilt that defines the ego's influence. The moral conscience performs an important role that allows the influence of both the super-ego and the ego to play out by offering a location where a dialogue between the contrasting dual forces can exist. The moral conscience initiates the need for a resolution through authority in conflict with intention whilst allowing the internal sense of guilt to find a differing, non-aggressive expression. The moral conscience acts as a state of being the desire for x that is common to both intention and the authority simultaneously whilst never being either exclusively; rather it is the more subjective aspiration to innocence outlined by Auden. Readers are aware that this understanding of the process of reading detective fiction is one in which they offer the

[108] Freud, pp136-7

location where this moral conscience functions as they centralise the aesthetics of the criminal and the ethics of the detective simultaneously.

This experience is different to that commonly stated by psychoanalytic readings of the genre which focus on the role of the author rather than the reader. Freud argues that the moral conscience has the purpose of "forming an erotic attachment to the super-ego".[109] The moral conscience acts to facilitate the redefinition of guilt but the desires from which this guilt arise need to be explored. Auden made allusions of his own whilst describing the figure of the corpse in relation to the parent. For Freud there is a close connection between the presence of a sense of guilt and the concept of the Oedipus complex:

> Conscience is the internal perception of the rejection of a particular wish operating within us. The stress, however, is upon the fact that this rejection has no need to appeal to anything else for support, that it is quite "certain of itself". This is even clearer in the case of the consciousness of guilt- the perception of the internal condemnation of an act by which we have carried out a particular wish.[110]

The central Oedipal desires of patricide and incest are presented as those that are primarily going to elicit a sense of guilt that necessitates the conscience to define and reject the negative internal perception. Despite being an extreme, each of Freud's examples illustrates concepts inherent in the reader's guilty desires: murder, or violence, and sex. This is central to Auden's understanding of the satisfying crime when he warned that the victim must not

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[109]Freud, p 136

[110] Sigmund Freud, (1913) Totem and Taboo p68

be a criminal except in the context of possibly blackmail, a crime that has a personal connotation. There must be such an emotional link expressed by these elemental crimes.

For the personal connection with the reader's own guilt, not presumably being criminal themselves, to be established, the Oedipal is the extreme end to which the desire for x could lead, the benchmark against which the conscience defines guilt being framed in the conception of literary tragedy at its most multi-layered with regard to moral objection on the personal level. As Freud states, the sense of guilt, and the reader's capacity to be defined in terms of guilt concerning such criminal acts, need not be centred on anything so explicit:

> Analytical work then brought the surprising discovery that such deeds were done principally because they were forbidden, and because their execution was accompanied by the mental relief for their doer. He was suffering from an oppressive feeling of guilt, of which he did not know the origin, and after he had committed a misdeed this oppression was mitigated. His sense of guilt was at least attached to something.[111]

The guilt is present before the misdeed occurs; the misdeed itself acts as the means through which that sense of guilt is validated. This is the "sense of sin" that was central to Auden's conception of guilt as a motivation for desire. As Freud acknowledges, in modern society, it might be that readers collectively are already feeling guilty and the need for explanation is a strong desire in itself.

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[111] Sigmund Freud, (1916) "Criminals from a Sense of Guilt" p332

In her summary of the Lacan- Derrida debate concerning Poe's "The Purloined Letter"[112] Barbara Johnson makes the following connection concerning psychoanalysis:

> Psychoanalysis is not the interpretation of repetition; it is the repetition of a *trauma of interpretation*– called "castration" or "parental coitus" or "the Oedipus complex" or even "sexuality"– the traumatic deferred interpretation not *of* an event, but *as* an event that never took place. The "primal scene" is not a scene but an interpretative infelicity whose result was to situate the interpreter in an intolerable position. And psychoanalysis is the reconstruction of that interpretative infelicity not as its interpretation, but as its first and last act. Psychoanalysis has content only insofar as it repeats the dis-content of what never took place.[113]

This succinct summary draws a closer parallel to the comparable natures of psychoanalysis and detective fictions than the arguments presented before were able to. The notion of the reader/analysand being placed in an "intolerable position" by the "primal scene" can be translated as the situation that occurs through the sense of guilt that necessitates the moral conscience. What Johnson argues is that this never takes place, as the position of the reader in a detective text is one where s/he is connecting with guilt that is not theirs but in which s/he has chosen to immerse her/himself. The repetition of the "*trauma of interpretation*" is as central to the process of returning to read again, the addiction that was stated by Auden, as it is to psychoanalysis. The guilt, or the potential for the feeling of guilt, is never

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[112] Barbara Johnson, (1977) "The Frame of Reference: Poe, Lacan, Derrida"

[113] Johnson, p245

removed, only redefined by each successive reading; it may be "dis-content" but it allows the transference from interpretation to act.

Repetition is at the heart of Lacan's reading of "The Purloined Letter" in his "Seminar". Lacan illustrates that the structure of the story revolves around the repetition of an act: the "primal scene" is the theft of the letter by the Minister from the Queen; this is then repeated in a second scene where Dupin steals the letter from the Minister as a means to solve the crime and restore order. Lacan presents the analysis of a detective text that involves robbery and not murder, but this does not alter the realm of the reader's experience of guilt as the "primal scene" is still an equivalent metaphor on which the reader's desire can construct the sense of guilt. Marie Bonaparte in her psychoanalytic interpretation of the life and work of Poe draws a comparison between the actions here and the "primal scene" as explained by Freud, casting the letter in the role of the phallus. This is an interpretation that Lacan in part appropriates. What is central to Lacan's understanding of these two scenes is the following:

> If it is indeed clear that each of the two scenes of the real drama is narrated in the course of a different dialogue, it is only through access to those notions set forth in our teaching that one may recognise that it is not thus simply to augment the charm of exposition, but that the dialogues themselves, in the opposite use they make of the powers of speech, take on a tension which makes them a different drama, one which our vocabulary will distinguish from the first as persisting in the symbolic order.[114]

[114]Jacques Lacan, (1972) "Seminar on 'The Purloined Letter', Trans. Jeffrey Mehlman p34

The repetition creates a tension that initiates a dialogue, and this dialogue is significantly one that involves intersubjectivity at its core. The defamiliarisation in the language construct, as recognised by the reader as illustrating the "symbolic order," is redefined to allow for the realisation that the "symbolic order" may now offer a reconstructed narrative course from that which readers were first led to believe. This parallels the semiotics described by Ginzburg as the means through which readers develop the specific linguistic understanding of marginal details needed to unravel the text.

Lacan's notion of intersubjectivity adds an extra dimension to this semiotic reading. For Lacan the process of repetition is one that works as a transformative necessity. The repetition is designed to take the "primal scene" from the realm of the symbolic into the realm of language and it is the intersubjectivity that allows this transition from "the domain of exactitude to the register of truth."[115] The repetition has initiated a dialogue that has allowed for an understanding that would not otherwise be possible. This is at the heart of detective fiction where, as Auden illustrated, repetition is central to the process in which the narrative is constructed and reconstructed; it is part of the addiction that the detective reader feels so actively.

The signifier around which the text revolves, in this instance the purloined letter of the title, and in Auden's analysis the corpse, is central. This leads Lacan to focus upon the readings presented by Freud:

> If what Freud discovered and rediscovers with perpetually increasing sense of shock has a meaning, it is that the displacement of the signifier determines the subjects in

[115] Lacan, p35

> their acts, in their destiny, in their refusals, in their blindness, in their end and in their fate, their innate gifts and social acquisitions notwithstanding, without regard for character or sex, and that, willingly or not, everything that might be considered the stuff of psychology, kit and caboodle, will follow the path of the signifier.[116]

As the displacement of the signifier is central to everything in psychology, so it is to the construction of detective fiction and the reading experience that is initiated. The central signifier is, as Auden illustrates, the cause for the displacement that creates the dialogue of guilt, it is the symbol of the need for the moral conscience to come into play dialectically with the aesthetic and the ethical. Readers must follow the signifier to the necessary conclusion as they are aware that this will offer an understanding of the guilt that they are experiencing. But what Lacan supports in such analysis of the signifier is that it offers an intersubjective process. It is not concerned with the content of the letter, as that has no personal dimension to the reader, but with the symbolic significance of the letter as a disruptive device to the self as the centre of the reader's own potential guilt. The signifier is the element which evokes the "*trauma of interpretation*" requiring the process of repetition that allows dialogue. As Lacan indicates, the reader is never told the content of the letter and indeed does not need to be told as the letter functions regardless: "a letter always arrives at its destination."[117] This destination is plural as it arrives at the destination necessitated by the text as well as by the reader.

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[116] Lacan, pp43-4

[117] Lacan, p53

This returns to the notion of symbolic order being central to the reader's understanding of the need for repetition. Lacan states that his study arises from the desire to look at the signifying chain through a text that is itself concerned with a dialogue concerning "the simple and odd" that is essential with regard to creating a context for such a chain. It is the specifics of this dialogue and the way that it reinterprets the signifier that is of interest because it becomes clear that what Poe is concerned with is not simply using the purloined letter as a signifier of the reader's guilt, framed through our projected content of the letter, but to offer a commentary on the nature of the genre that he himself is credited with creating. The content of the purloined letter is in one aspect the content of "The Purloined Letter" and indeed other detective fiction.

"The Purloined Letter" is the third and last of Poe's detective stories featuring Auguste Dupin and is frequently cited as the most successful of the three. The failings of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" have already been discussed. "The Case of Marie Roget," the attempt to solve a real crime through fiction, was equally criticised, not least when Poe's solution was found to be wrong. The success of these stories appears to be something that Poe was interested in at the inception of "The Purloined Letter" as he has the narrator inform the reader of the following in the first paragraph:

> I was mentally discussing certain topics which had formed matter for conversation between us at an earlier period of the evening; I mean the affair of the Rue Morgue, and the mystery attending the murder of Marie Roget.[118]

[118] Edgar Allan Poe, (1845) "The Purloined Letter" p6

The importance of this statement is twofold. In the first instance it illustrates the centrality of repetition in the genre of detective fiction by quickly drawing the reader's attention to the fact that this story is one that will follow the same generic pattern as those texts featuring the same characters had done previously. This is a technique evoked by many successors, not least Doyle whose opening paragraphs often call to mind the whole canon of Holmes stories.

This is not a simple case of repetition. In the opening exchanges of "The Purloined Letter" it is defined that whilst this will be a further case of ratiocination it will also differ from the previous stories by, firstly, not being concerned with "assassination", but also through being "*very* simple", although still "*odd*". This is a feature that Lacan states:

> Here then, *simple* and *odd*, as we are told on the very first page, reduced to its simplest expression, is the singularity of the letter, which as the title indicates, is the *true subject* of the tale: since it can be diverted, it must have a course *which is proper to it*: the trait by which its incidence as signifier is affirmed.[119]

For the Minister to take the letter in this story his sin is transferred symbolically to the letter which is now the diverging force. Is this not the technique of detective fiction? It is the purpose of a detective text to diverge, to create the false lures that Žižek identified, taking readers on narrative paths that are not those that they should follow but may appeal, and Poe is aware of this.

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[119] Jacques Lacan, (1972) "Seminar on "The Purloined Letter", Trans. Jeffrey Mehlman p43

The clearest illustration of Poe's awareness is in the title itself:

> To *purloin*, says the Oxford dictionary, is an Anglo-French word, that is: composed of the prefix *pur-*, found in *purpose, purchase, purport,* and of the Old French word: *loing, loigner, longe*. We recognise in the first element the Latin *pro-*, as opposed to *ante*, insofar as it presupposes a rear in front of which it is borne, possibly as its warrant, indeed even as its pledge (whereas *ante* goes forth to confront what it encounters). As for the second, an Old French word: *loigner*, a verb attributing place *au loing* (or, still in use, *longe*), it does not mean *au loin* (far off), but *au long de* (alongside); it is a question then of *putting aside*, or, to invoke a familiar expression which plays on the two meanings: *mettre a gauche* (to put to the left; to put amiss).[120]

As Lacan illustrates for Poe the whole of the story is in the title. To "purloin" is both to divert from the path and to put to the left, the reader then has both the symbolic and literal course of the letter made apparent, as the letter is itself apparent, from the start. What is more the reader has already been informed that the solution is simple. Unlike the criticism he received for the other stories, Poe is playing extremely fair here in letting the reader who thinks in such ways have the solution immediately if s/he so recognises it.

This is the purpose of the story. The reader does not recognise it as s/he does not immediately choose to think in the way that Dupin, for whom the case has no difficulty, does. Poe is aware of this fact and uses his narrator as an observer who has a similar experience of believing that the solution must be more complicated to reflect the reader's

[120] Lacan, p43

experience. Readers recognise that there is the presence of guilt in the story by recognising the letter as a signifier, but they do not follow the chain of significance in the direction that should be followed, "And the identification… of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent, depends, if I understand you aright, upon the accuracy with which the opponent's intellect is admeasured."[121] Readers choose, like the Prefect, to find themselves exploring their own moral conscience concerning what they would do with such an item, "and the remote source of his defeat lies in the supposition that the Minister is a fool."[122] Of the two conversations that readers are presented with in the story the first is about the search that the Prefect has conducted. What readers notice here is that Dupin prompts the Prefect ever further into more elaborate places of concealment all of which, it is revealed, the Prefect has explored. The repetition at play is narratively interesting whilst also disheartening as readers try, like the Prefect, to think of more elaborate possibilities to be explored. The mistake that readers make is that attention is drawn to the symbolic guilt framed in the letter as signifier not the guilt of the person who has committed the crime. It is this, through the few utterances that Dupin picks up on from the Prefect's discussion, which leads Dupin to the solution.

The second discussion is the more interesting as, having returned the letter to the Prefect, the conversation turns to considering human nature. What Poe is presenting readers with is not just an explanation of how Dupin was able to retrieve the letter but also a commentary on why readers, like the Prefect and the narrator, did not. The solution to both is singular, we were "purloined", put to the side of what we should have been focussing

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[121] Edgar Allan Poe, (1845) "The Purloined Letter" p16

[122] Poe, p17

upon. This returns to the false lures that Žižek suggested but it also returns to Johnson's suggestion that psychologically readers have taken themselves through a *trauma of interpretation* as a result of the repetition process. The narrator's suggested addiction to these cases in the opening paragraph is demonstrated to be the reader's. "The Purloined Letter" with its solution in the title is the ultimate example of "dis-content" because the mystery and intrigue which readers have been looking for in order to explore their sense of guilt has never been present in the text.

Poe has been playing with the reader all along, laughing from the sidelines at the comic construction of a story that fools so successfully. Although comic constructions are present, including the bathos of the lengths to which the Prefect goes in his search, they seem to be more affectionate than cruel. It is for this reason that, rather than just steal the letter, Poe has Dupin replace it with one of his own. This capitulation to schadenfreude allows readers to see Dupin as someone human in the last moments and humanises the story, whilst also bringing about an understanding of a conclusion by offering a final defamiliarisation that deliberately affects readers in such a way that they realise further dialogue is no longer needed. At the moment of Dupin becoming human, he no longer becomes distinguished from the reader, whilst at the same time levelling the criminal; parity is found all around and a satisfaction of conclusion is reached.

In detective fiction, by making something appear strange, the disruption to society that Auden saw in the criminal act, and the drawing of the reader's attention to it, brings the reader to a state where the desire for clarity is paramount and potentially, if temporarily, achievable. This desire is for a restoration of the world where such strangeness does not exist, the desire for x. This necessitates a dialectic situation that would allow the reader to refamiliarise with that which has become defamiliarised, to allow that which is unknown–

guilt– to become known. The moral conscience serves as the location for the dialectic of refamiliarisation; it is the awareness that there is something that remains hidden that needs to be known, the cause of guilt, the need to be punished. The moral conscience functions as both simultaneously. The moral conscience is the location where the two opposite positions can meet to explore the common element of x, that which will allow for a stabilisation. It is, in Auden's terminology, the restoration of Eden.

CHAPTER THREE: NARRATIVE THEORY AS AN EXPRESSION OF SATISFACTION

Any reading of detective fiction enacts a dialogue regarding the reader's sense of guilt. This dialogue revolves around a conflict between the ethical and the aesthetic in the need to find a locale of commonality that would allow for the satisfaction in society's balance. Freud described part of the satisfaction of the conscience as the dual desire of achieving the love of the authority of the super-ego whilst simultaneously meeting the desire of the reader's own instinctual satisfaction in the ego. It is this dual desire that offers the framework for the dialogic process that underlies any reading. Because the duality of the structure is central to the reading process at all times, the surface narrative uncovering the true narrative, detective fiction is especially suited to explore how such a dialogic functions. How Freud's theories work in parallel with other theories concerning literary satisfaction can offer a forum for a greater understanding of this area.

In the first epigram, Barthes states a definite conception of The Pleasure of the Text:

> THE PLEASURE OF THE TEXT: like Bacon's simulator, it can say: *never apologize, never explain*. It never denies anything: "I shall look away, that will henceforth be my sole negation."[123]

In the space of thirty words readers are presented with an extremely diverse piece of text: there are three typological font styles, capitals, lower case, and italic; direct, indirect and reported speech; an attributed quotation and a non-attributed quotation; a positive and a

[123] Roland Barthes, (1973) The Pleasure of the Text trans. Miller, Richard (1975), p3

negative statement. What is more the capitalised statement that opens the text, which is also simultaneously its title, makes a definite presumption that the remainder of the text never denies or questions: that text can give pleasure. Barthes knows he is working with a certainty and he knows that the response that he will elicit from his reader is "why?" but not just "why?" singular but "why?" plural. Why is "why?" inherently a defining principle of the fact that there will be a "pleasure of the text"? Because it is a response, it opens a dialogic process that will in itself generate a form of desire that in turn will search for satisfaction. It appears ironic that the text should undertake such a purpose when one of the key points made within this epigram is to "*never apologise, never explain*." It is here that the plurality of the question as to "why?" is particularly important. The moment that plurality becomes a feature is also the case when such singular terms as explanation becomes destabilised, there will always be this dialogic offering the potential to contradict any absolute. It is this process that Barthes wishes to explore and locate. The contents calls this epigram "Affirmation" and it is this noun– it is important that he uses a noun and not an adjective– that is central to the argument that Barthes expresses. The affirmation is that there is an unapologetic pleasure of the text, what Barthes wishes to explore is the true nature of this pleasure.

Barthes quickly draws a picture that summons up an existing opposition in order to elicit this pleasure, introducing the concept relating to the importance of text: namely *jouissance*. Barthes argues there can be transference between the pleasure obtained through writing and that obtained through reading. He immediately dismisses this notion but feels that this opens a space that contains the pleasure that must be defined:

> I must seek out this reader (must "cruise" him) *without knowing where he is*. A site of bliss is then created. It is not the reader's "person" that is necessary to me, it is this site: the possibility of a dialectics of desire, of an *unpredictability* of bliss: the bets are not placed, there can still be a game.[124]

Whereas this appears initially to be framed in the relation between two separate entities, being author and reader, the beginning of the process in a single person can be seen, and this is clearly a sexual process. Barthes deliberately uses the word "cruise" in order to explain the relation with the reader, a word that has connotations of the random, of multiple points of exploration, not holding back in order to seek the correct satisfaction/s. The word is also one of slang to reference a specific homosexual exploration without a defined destination.

The use of slang is important to Barthes' conception as it offers a link to Freud's description of the daydreamer. Readers are aware that this is slang through Barthes deliberate use of inverted commas which indicate that it is a term that he wishes to use but is not fully willing to sanction. The desire of the daydreamer that is tainted by the guilt of that desire is present in this expression. The daydreamer is also a "cruiser" whose process is one of exploration of those "unsatisfied wishes" that need to be fulfilled in order to correct the "unsatisfying reality". For Freud: "They are either ambitious wishes, which serve to elevate the subject's personality; or they are erotic ones."[125] That Barthes is more reductive serves only to indicate that there is an inherent erotic connection attached to the former

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[124] Barthes, p4

[125] Sigmund Freud, (1908) "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming" p147

wish for elevation, as such a need to increase status is often sexually motivated. The "dialectic of desire" is for Freud, in the daydream, the point where: "past, present and future are strung together, as it were, on the thread of the wish that runs through them"[126]; and it is the case that in Barthes' quotation an equivalent experience occurs at the moment of jouissance, an experience that is further heightened by the "*unpredictability*" of its occurrence, and importantly the plurality.

The author has the authority but in that author, too, is the fear of the reader as the receiver of the textual information that is guilt at missing the mark. For this purpose Barthes calls upon the need for the site of jouissance, of a place where there will be an erotic satisfaction achieved that is removed in all but a metonymic link from either writer or reader but accessible to each as the meeting place for their "dialectics of desire". This image is the reversed perspective from the position normally taken where we align ourselves with the reader, often ourselves, accessing the work of the unknown writer. In this situation it is seen that readers acquiesce to the need to fall into this dialectic field.

There are problems if readers assume this dialectic of desire, particularly in a text such as The Moonstone where the characters are designed to try to make the reader acquiesce to their often conflicting ethical perspectives. Readers tend to assume, as s/he is the one who created the text, that the author has the authoritative reading that s/he wishes to impress upon them: in the reading process the author is the super ego dictating ethical certainty, as readers are the ego, the fearful part that has a sense of aesthetic intention that what they are extracting from any given text is not that which the super-ego author wants them to understand. What Barthes illustrates here is that if readers were solely bound to

[126] Freud, p148

those beliefs it is unlikely that writers would ever write as their reader is unknowable, and similarly the reverse for the reader. It is notable that from Barthes' author perspective the reverse of the structure can be seen, that s/he is the one in fear with the potential for intention, whilst his reader has the authority– further reflecting Freud's comparison between the daydreamer and the creative writer. This is why this all-important site is necessary, this point of jouissance. It is important that this is a dialogic process, but it is equally important that this dialogic is tied to two other concepts as far as Barthes is concerned: the first of these is erotic desire; the second the definition of the process in terms of the ludic.

Let us deal with the second of these first, as it will be more marginal to our analysis. For Barthes this process must be a "game" with all of the connotations that this metaphor allows for. The most obvious is an understanding that a true game should start with the perspective that both players have equal opportunity to leave victorious, whilst there is always the potential for a draw. What this image destroys is the inherent expectation that either the author or the reader is dominant in the process, thus distancing Barthes' conception of the ludic from the systems of control that were presented by Callois.[127] Detective fiction is often dismissed because the ludic qualities are considered as non-literary; yet to follow the analogy drawn by Barthes all literature, all reading, is ludic. That this dimension should be more or less apparent is irrelevant, in fact the more apparently ludic text may be, the more hyper-literary, as it lays bare the challenges that reading towards pleasure makes possible. Rather than the distance that is often argued to be the feature of the ludic nature of the text, for Barthes the inverse is true, and it is this dimension

[127] Roger Caillois, (1941) "The Detective Novel as Game"

that allows for the greater connection. Equally important is the first part of Barthes' ludic metaphor, the conception that "bets" can be placed upon this dialogic process of the pursuit of jouissance: it is always a gamble to make the move away from the entrenched defined position as either author or reader. The uncertainty may be a risk but this is part of the "cruising" experience. It is an essential dimension of the experience if any such pleasure is to be achieved, as it offers the daydreamer's fulfilment of the "correction of unsatisfying reality".

This leads to the relevance of the definition of the dialectic process as being one of desire. The definition of this moment allowing for the dialectic of desire leads to a more precise definition of what Barthes conceives to be the nature of pleasure. This makes the use of jouissance, and its connection to the erotic, more appropriate: "The text you write must prove to me *that it desires me*. This proof exists: it is writing. Writing is: the science of the various blisses of language, its Karma Sutra (this science has but one treatise: writing itself)."[128] The presence of desire is an essential element of writing as it offers the drive for pleasure that is at the heart of the process of any writing. Writing must elicit desire, or for Barthes, it is not writing. For Barthes writing is imbued with a sense of artificiality and cannot be a direct expression of the author. By identifying the desire to pleasure the reader Barthes centres upon the most honest characteristic that he feels that any writing should have.

It is in the nature of this desire that Barthes' argument joins with the moral conscience. The presence of all desire in any writing means that there is an erotic experience always at the heart of this dialectic of desire. In describing this erotic process,

[128] Roland Barthes, (1973) The Pleasure of the Text trans. Miller, Richard (1975), p6

Barthes presents a further version of the super-ego/ ego conflict by stating that "neither culture nor its destruction is erotic; it is the seam between them, the fault, the flaw, which becomes so."[129] The site where this dialectic of desire, the erotic process, is taking place is a "seam", what is more this seam is definable as both "fault" and "flaw". The seam is a conception that is neither culture nor destruction but to be described as erotic it must be linked to both simultaneously, just as the moral conscience is neither the ego nor the super-ego but is charged by reflecting both.

This is an erotic conception because to be at this point the connection must be a meeting of desire in that it is a point at which both sides of the dialectic find what it is about the other that appeals; it offers a point of temporary destination in the "cruise". What is significant here is that this is a point which has been sought but has not been consciously recognised as an element of the desire. It is a point where the distracted concern of the daydream becomes a realisation of that which can correct "unsatisfactory reality". That which is recognised is the point of the other that can never be itself except in the moment of jouissance that this recognition initiates. This is the moment of presence at the seam. Barthes defines this moment of the seam as a point of loss equal to the concept of its being the moment of acquisition. If something is uncovered, the thing is discovered but the need to uncover is lost.

This is the central dynamic at work in detective fiction: the constant desire for x must be generated for the reader to need to find further seams that will allow moments of jouissance. Eroticism is central as the successful author will always make the reader aware that for each small satisfaction of a desire for x, that fleeting pleasure, there is always the

[129] Barthes, p7

true seam, the true fulfilment of jouissance to arrive at the conclusion. What Barthes clarifies is that in the moment of jouissance readers are made aware of the duality of the dialectic of desire. It is at this point that readers are being made conscious of the point of unity where they are met with the satisfaction of the aesthetic and ethical being in coinherence:

> This [seam] is a very subtle and nearly untenable status for discourse: narrativity is dismantled yet the story is still readable: never have the two edges of the seam been clearer and more tenuous, never has pleasure been better offered to the reader- if at least he appreciates controlled discontinuities, faked conformities, and indirect destruction.[130]

The detective story makes a virtue of such discourse that allows its own indirect destruction whilst also bringing about the point of concluding pleasure in the denouement of the narrative. As the plot is finally uncovered the story is coming to its end, in Shklovsky's[131] argument the sjužet is uncovering the fabula. Both of these parallel narrative positions are aware of the nature of this process occurring, as indeed is the reader. Readers have the point of the "past, present and future" of Freud's daydream, finding the simultaneous "thread of the wish" and important to this is the quoted phrase with which Barthes opened his discussion: "*never apologise, never explain*". The reader has cruised and been cruised by the exploration of the crime within the detective text; the guilt of that crime has been

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[130] Barthes, p9

[131] Viktor Shklovsky, (1929) Theory of Prose trans. Benjamin Sher (1990)

explored for satisfaction on both ethical and aesthetic levels within the daydream. That satisfaction found in the moment of the denouement is an erotic experience. The narrativity of the moment, the readable story, needs no apologies or explanations– just acknowledgement that it is jouissance. It is both pleasurable and guilty. The conclusion is both the authorial intended object and the instinctually satisfying conclusion of the desired object.

The moral conscience is not an intended product of either the ego or the super-ego: "The pleasure of the text is that moment when my body pursues its own ideas- for my body does not have the same ideas I do."[132] Readers are aware of the super-ego and ego as part of the tri-partite mind but what is being expressed as the point of jouissance, at the heart of the seam, is something more than this: something which offers a further duality which illustrates that the pursuit of pleasure through the desires motivating the reading process is the pursuit of that which is indefinable by other means. As Barthes states, "pleasure can be expressed in words, bliss cannot."[133] There is not an English word that translators can use to offer an equivalent sense of this process, and one could argue that Barthes only used "jouissance" as it was the best word possible to him.

Moral conscience is similarly unspeakable, inexpressible. It is a function of the reader in the dialogic process that s/he is aware of but cannot articulate clearly. Jouissance equally cannot be expressed. Moral conscience is the meeting in the seam of the law of the super-ego and the intention of the ego in a way that is simultaneously capable of allowing the reader to love the authority whilst still feeling instinctively satisfied. The reader is still

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[132] Barthes, p17

[133] Barthes, p21

able to accept the inherent oppositional necessity for these instincts. What is important to Barthes in this process is that "the opposing forces are no longer repressed but in a state of becoming: nothing is really antagonistic, everything is plural"[134]; in many ways this is the ultimate definition of dialogic. The means to continue in dialogue must still have the potential to occur; the product of the dialogue is always "become."

Although an earlier work, S/Z[135] is closely linked to The Pleasure of the Text. The latter conception of the seam appears to be a necessary adjunct to the arguments of S/Z. There are two areas where Barthes offers conceptions of the process of experiencing literature that are potentially opposed and that allow us to deepen our understanding of the importance of the seam as a parallel to moral conscience. The first of these is Barthes' distinction between readerly (lisible) texts, and those that are presented as writerly (scriptable) texts. The second area is in Barthes' conception of the irreversible codes, the proairetic code of actions ("voice of the empirical") and the hermeneutic code of enigmas and accidents ("voice of truth"), looking at whether it is in the combination of these that readers develop their more complete sense of narrative.

Barthes outlines the distinction between his two models of text in the conclusion to the opening paragraph of S/Z:

> Our evaluation can be linked only to a practice, and this practice is that of writing. On the one hand, there is what it is possible to write, and on the other what it is no longer possible to write: what is within the practice of the writer and what has left it: which

[134] Barthes p31

[135] Roland Barthes, (1970) S/Z trans. Miller, Richard (1974)

> texts would I consent to write (to re-write), to desire, to put forth as a force in this world of mine? What evaluation finds is precisely this value: what can be written (rewritten) today: the *writerly*. Why is the writerly our value? Because the goal of literary work (of literature as work) is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text.[136]

The writer being a producer of the text is central to the idea of the writerly. As Barthes questions, is the desire on the part of the reader, through the reading process, to be a creator of their own text, and by extension this text? This is certainly an area to explore with detective fiction where the reader is challenged with the idea of creating their own text by choosing their own solution as s/he is presented with the facts of the case.

Barthes continues: "Opposite the writerly text, then is its countervalue, its negative, reactive value: what can be read, but not written: the *readerly*. We call any readerly text a classic text."[137]Barthes distinguishes, in the last sentence, the readerly as being a distinctive text from the writerly but prior to this the relationship between the two forms of textual evaluation is less distinct. This attitude to the readerly is motivated by Barthes' reaction to the traditional teaching method of *explication de texte* which stressed that the role of the critic/teacher was to produce a singular central meaning from a text. Such an attitude to a text's lack of multiple reading identifies how such a reactive text as S/Z can be useful in offering insight to genre fiction such as detective fiction which has in turn suffered from the perception of the singular in reading experience. For Barthes the readerly is like the

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[136] Barthes, p4

[137] Barthes, p4

denouement, it is an opinion that is expressed by the text in conclusion but it should not necessarily drive the reading process throughout.

The final sentence suggests that Barthes sees these concepts as separate units, as differing kinds of texts that do not interact. Analysis of Barthes' further distinction raises these questions:

> The writerly text is a perpetual present, upon which no *consequent* language (which would inevitably make it past) can be superimposed; the writerly text is *ourselves writing*, before the infinite play of the world (the world of function) is traversed, intersected, stopped, plasticized by some singular system (Ideology, Genus, Criticism) which reduces the plurality of entrances, the opening of networks, the infinity of languages. The writerly is the novelistic without the novel, poetry without the poem, the essay without the dissertation, writing without style, production without product, structuration without structure. But the readerly texts? They are products (and not productions), they make up the enormous mass of our literature.[138]

Those who argue that detective fiction texts are readerly are correct in that they are physical entities that can be quantified as product, but does this render the above discussion redundant? It does not, since what Barthes is articulating with the writerly is the process through which the reader engages with these texts. The temporal dimension becomes an

[138] Roland Barthes, (1970) S/Z trans. Miller, Richard (1974) p5

interesting point in the contention and reflection of the text. The process of reading is not set in a solid temporal place from which readerly utterances can be made.

In Theory of Prose[139] (1929) Shklovsky proposes a model of narrative structure that closely parallels the concepts of conscience in Freud and seam in Barthes as I have deployed them here. At the centre of Shklovsky's theory are three concepts: sjužet, fabula, and motif.[140] Discussion of Shklovsky's theory usually ignores the notion of motif completely, or reduces it to a function of the sjužet in its process of uncovering the fabula. By defining the sjužet and fabula as specific elements of narrative, we are for the first time given a literary model that corresponds to the super-ego/authority in relation to ego/intention dialogic.

The writerly is not sjužet, although it needs sjužet to function, it is the process of reading, the engagement with the dialectic of desire in the seam:

> This new operation is *interpretation* (in the Nietzschean sense of the word). To interpret a text is not to give it a (more or less justified, more or less free) meaning, but on the contrary to appreciate what *plural* constitutes it.[141]

Barthes' distinction is of the existence of the process as a realm to be explored, reading as a temporally-variant experience that is seen to be writerly in experience and readerly in

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[139] Viktor Shklovsky, (1929) Theory of Prose trans. Sher, Benjamin (1990)

[140] For this chapter I will use Shklovsky's terminology and not the English in the translation by Sher (1990) where Fabula becomes Story and Sjužet Plot.

[141] Barthes, p5

reflection. Readers are aware that the readerly text will always be there as a product, but in the process of reading the text one has to accept plurality. Parallels can be drawn between Barthes and Shklovsky in the understanding of pun that both develop:

> Put another way, the *double understanding*, the basis for a play on words cannot be analyzed in simple terms of signification (two signifieds for one signifier); for that there must be the distinction of two recipients; and if, contrary to what occurs here, both recipients are not given in the story, if the play on words seems to be addressed to one person only (for example, the reader), this person must be imagined as being divided into two subjects, two cultures, two languages, two zones of listening (whence the traditional affinity between puns and "folly" or madness: the Fool, dressed in motley, a divided costume, was once the purveyor of the *double understanding*). In relation to an ideally pure message (as in mathematics), the division of reception constitutes a "noise," it makes communication obscure, fallacious, hazardous: uncertain.[142]

Although the concept of the seam is one of Barthes' later concepts what is evident in the discussion of the "noise" that characterises the double understanding is that we are presented with a further parallel to the Freudian dialogic between the super-ego and ego. The moral conscience was seen to be that moment where awareness occurs in the relation between the super-ego and ego, a place where questions were raised concerning the interaction of these two forces. The notion of questioning being at the root of the moral

[142] Barthes, p145

conscience casts it as a position of uncertainty, a definition that is expressed in Barthes' conclusion concerning the "noise" in the above quotation. It is this uncertainty that is central to the need for the dialogic between the aesthetic and the ethical to occur.

Later in S/Z Barthes discusses the "scene" of this noise as being the point that allows for the reader to be fully interactive with the text. For Barthes this "noise" is a "defect in communication" that allows the reader the following:

> What the whole structuration erects for him and offers him as the most precious nourishment is a *countercommunication*; the reader is an accomplice, not of this or that character, but of the discourse itself insofar as it plays on the division of reception, the impurity of communication: the discourse, and not one or another of its characters, is the only *positive* hero of the story.[143]

The concept of the writerly as a means of producing the sense of jouissance is rooted in this process of positivity. The impurity of communication necessitates a dialectic that produces an understanding in the reader that is simultaneously driven by the authority of the elements of the text that make it into a readerly document. It is a physical work, but also instinctually, satisfactory in its individual positivity through the writerly process of the singular understanding of the plurality in a single reading.

How the authority is expressed is of particular interest to Barthes in S/Z through his definition of distinctive codes that drive the reading process so that the writerly is

[143] Barthes, p145

nevertheless codified. As Peter Brooks[144] puts it in condensed form, discussing plot as an expression of the authority of the codes, the proairectic code is obviously an important part of any narrative in that it offers the events that happen. Brooks makes clear that what is of particular interest here is the role of the hermeneutic code as the necessary part of the dialogic, as a representation of the authority that is needed in the relationship in order to allow for the achievement of jouissance at the point of fabula. The order of the hermeneutic code may not be presented in the sjužet in a chronological way, it is in the fabula that both of these cohere and it is here where the full expression of jouissance is experienced.

Shklovsky discusses the points of truth as being important to his understanding of the metonymic function of motifs, and this appears to be the obvious importance of the hermeneutic code in Barthes' definition because it is this element of the code that allows for "meaning". What is presented in S/Z is the positivity of the writerly interaction as being ultimately controlled by the necessity for truth. The writerly approach offers the ego, but this, in order to be grounded in meaning, needs a truth that arises from authority, the hermeneutic as super-ego: the meeting of these two produces the point of jouissance, the point of conscience, of commonality in the desires of the aesthetic and the ethical.

To return to the conception of moral conscience, S/Z presents a strong model, but one that is at present abstract. In this model such terms as "meaning," "truth," "authority" and "desire," are presented without being defined. It is for this reason that I present the term "moral conscience" in the Freudian method as this is a term that denotes the need to have a conception of ethical positioning in order to fully understand the specific aesthetic narratological dimension of the reading process. For jouissance to be achieved in the

[144] Peter Brooks, (1984) Reading For The Plot pp18-19

reading of a detective story there would have to be a narrative dimension that conforms to the ethical perspective of the reader that corresponds to the moral conscience.

Although The Pleasure of the Text refers to dialectics, and discusses extensively the roles of the reader and author, it is not explicitly a text about the nature of narrative experience. I have argued that there is a parallel between Barthes' seam and the role of conscience as expressed by Freud, but we need to look at these in relation to a truly literary model in order to make clearer my argument about how these help understand a reading of detective fiction.

Firstly it would be productive to look at arguments formulated against the connection between the sjužet and fabula, but which still recognise the duality that is present within such texts as detective fiction. Tzvetan Todorov formulated one such argument in "The Typology of Detective Fiction". Todorov's essay aims to define the different stylistic variations within the genre but notes that central to the definition of the genre is the following duality:

> At the base of the whodunit we find a duality, and it is this duality which will guide our description. This novel contains not one but two stories: the story of the crime and the story of the investigation. In their purest form, these two stories have no point in common.[145]

Todorov continues to further define the characteristics of each of these stories:

[145] Tzvetan Todorov, (1966) "The Typology of Detective Fiction" p44

> The first– the story of the crime– tells "what really happened," whereas the second- the story of the investigation– explains "how the reader (or the narrator) has come to know about it."[146]

There is an important distinction here in the fact that the first story, which Todorov aligns with Shklovsky's term fabula, "tells" and the second story, Shklovsky's sjužet, "explains". What readers are presented with is a form of text where the dramatisation of the fabula upon the sjužet is at the core of its distinction. Todorov sees this in terms of illustrating their relation within all narratives, suggesting that what is being dramatised is the "dynamic of interpretive ordering."[147] This is close to that identified both in Freud and Barthes, the super-ego position as "that which tells". Where the analysis so far presented differs from Todorov is in the use of the word for the process of the second story. Todorov states that the second story "explains"; if this is the case, then the notion of the dialectic, of desire or otherwise, is removed. Todorov puts forward a model where the dual narratives are presenting the same information in simultaneous time, in differing manners, but always in agreement with each other. There is no opposing view, no need for the linking of the seam or the moral conscience, as it would be redundant: the text Todorov presents is effectively a text without guilt. If we were to change the word to "interprets" it completely transforms the sense of Todorov's argument of there being no point in common between the narratives. Todorov's vision is like that of Ginzburg or Žižek in that it recognises that there is an uncovering process at work but does not locate with whom this is placed, the reader or the

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[146] Todorov, p45

[147] Todorov, p24

narrator. The change from "explain" to "interpret" reintroduces the reader as the location of seam or moral conscience.

This is what Peter Brooks argues in Reading For The Plot[148] where he writes that the crime, "what really happened", is not itself part of the narrative except as being a construct of the sjužet, the investigation. This is insignificant in that its role is solely to uncover the absent fabula. It is this need to uncover the fabula, the being caught within the sjužet, the plot, which gives readers the "intellectual uncertainty" and the dialectic of desire for x within the genre. Brooks states:

> The story is after all a construction, made by the reader, and the detective, from the implications of the narrative discourse, which is all he ever knows. What is important, whatever our decision about priority here, is the constructive, semiotic role of repetition: the function of plot as the active repetition and reworking of story in and by discourse.[149]

Present in the seam is the core of what is functioning within the dialectic of desire for x, the "semiotic role of repetition." The repetition illustrates Barthes' argument that there can be multiple moments of the seam and jouissance throughout a text, creating a chain of significance. It also places within that understanding a focus upon the analysis of discourse.

As the sjužet is the area that must be transformed, it is logical to look at this first. For Shklovsky the motif is not essentially a function of language, nor indeed is the fabula,

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[148] Peter Brooks, (1984) Reading For The Plot

[149] Brooks, p25

the sjužet however must be. Language is at the core of the sjužet and the sjužet function. This is parallel with the ego as the consciously articulate part of the dialectic in the Freudian model, the aesthetic. This awareness of the aesthetic is the instinctual awareness that can be voiced as being oppressed by the super-ego authority model, the ethical. For Shklovsky this is a process that is always at work within reading and like Barthes it leads him to stress the constant plurality that exists in the reading process, a plurality that draws particular attention to the constant potential pun contained within any writing. The concept of pun with its inherent dual meaning is seen to be the common state of affairs that is potential at any level of writing and ties with Freud's conception of the joke.

In Barthes' description of the process of the writerly it is that process with which readers construct the story through the signifiers that a given text presents. Shklovsky's motifs allow us to construct the sjužet in a similarly writerly way. The sjužet in Shklovsky's theory is something that is created within the reader as a chain of signification that links the progression of the moments of instinctual satisfaction felt through the awareness of motifs, of there being a narrative that readers can construct. The readerly is comparable to the fabula, the element of the text that offers the authority of an ending of this chain of significance, a satisfactory means to conclude the narrative in order to achieve jouissance, a place where the aesthetic and the ethical find commonality. Barthes' distinction that the readerly "can be read, but not written" echoes the language used to describe the fabula by Shklovsky, it is not a function of language but it is the necessary conclusion of narrative. It is the negative of the writerly because it has the capacity to destroy the narrative by bringing it to its conclusion, the moment of jouissance.

Language is for Shklovsky at the heart of the process of understanding and interacting. Across the genre of detective fiction the author who is most responsible for the

formalisation of Poe's prototype structure is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Across the course of 56 short stories and four novels Doyle was the first author of prominence to fully explore the variation within the genre, and language is central to this. Shklovsky identified that the Sherlock Holmes stories are open to the criticism that they bow down to a formulaic schema; however this is not regarded as a negative. Rather it is this field of repetition that allows exploration of the variation of the reading experience that is centred in the dialogue of the moral conscience. Repetition of form is not a concern for Shklovsky, providing there is not a repetition of content. It is in the variation of content, and the core focus upon language use, that Doyle was particularly skilled. A characteristic was in how he adapted the etymological motivation of pun as the defamiliarisation motif within his stories such as in the way that "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" and the later "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane" use the same occurrence of the ambiguous final utterance of a victim as the starting point of that which must be explored. In both of these stories it is the careful interpretation of the truth of the utterance, and the circumstances that necessitated it that is central to the detective process enacted by Holmes.

Boris Tomashevsky[150] states that there are two forms of motif, bound motifs and free motifs, and it is the play upon the combination and confusion of these that is at the heart of the story function within detective fiction. Bound motifs are those which are essential for the realisation of the plot, free motifs are narrative units that can simultaneously exist within the story without being relevant to the plot. In the case of detective fiction the combination of these two forms of motif is essential as one is the line of essential clues

[150] Boris Tomashevsky, (1925) "Thematics", trans Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (1965), pp61-95.

whilst the other represents the line of false lures, as Žižek describes them. It is the story function to define the relevant causality of each lure in order to uncover the true plot. Each of these lures ties with the parallel narratives, the bound narrative and the free narrative. Looking at the reading process from the beginning, going forward, the arguments for the ludic qualities of the riddle in the text become apparent. Readers are included in the mysteries and identify each motif unaware of whether they are bound or not, they are all potentially free and readers can only treat them as such. To bind them and be proven wrong would produce frustration and lack of jouissance.

In Doyle's stories readers are presented with the central pun from which the story is motivated. As with "The Purloined Letter", his titles offer a signifier that has the function of defamiliarisation in the initial reading experience. Doyle works from this position in order to create the necessary anticipation. From the start the reader is working in an etymological process: s/he is driven by the title's ambiguity from the starting point of the engagement with the text and is anticipating the moments where clues are "laid bare" in order to allow the uncovering of the truth of the story. This is the point where the duality of the narrative is made apparent to readers. If from this starting point readers can see that the titles alone as signifiers are open to multiple interpretations so it is that this first motif informs of the potential of the lure and the false lure in the narrative construction. This in turn initiates the dialogue in the moral conscience as readers are aware of the fact that there is an aesthetic, unusual, interpretation of the phrase that could take them into more fanciful areas. Readers are awaiting motifs where the aesthetic and the ethical coinhere, these being the points of jouissance, the locale of the desire for x.

An aspect of the chain of signification that Doyle repeatedly places in the titles of his short stories is the use of the word "adventure". This word is as much a signifier as the

ambiguous phrase that accompanies it. It is a word that readers tend not to focus upon in the same detail, to the point that some reprints abbreviate the titles to remove this significant genre definition. Unlike the common trope used by Christie, "The Murder", "Adventure" does not immediately suggest that readers are in the crime genre, rather an older form the picaresque. There is not the ethical dimension, or any sense of threat or authority. "Adventure", conversely, seems designed to appeal to the aesthetic side of the dialogic of the reader's moral conscience. By appealing to this side there is the anticipation that jouissance will not come through the discovery of the guilty person, which appears to be a given, but the means of their capture, which could contain a daring ingenuity. What is important in this signifier as a defamiliarising motif is that by distracting the reader from the start, s/he is already caught in attention to the wrong narrative. This is similar to the criticism of the prefect that Dupin outlines in "The Purloined Letter" where he looks for the ingenuity and not at what is apparent from fact. What is important in this discussion is the narrative's attempt to influence the cognitive understanding of the ethical position of the text.

James Phelan, working from the initial work of Wayne C. Booth, has defined a number of conclusions concerning narrative judgement in relation to ethical positioning. In "Narrative Judgements and the Rhetorical Theory of Narrative: Ian McEwan's *Atonement*"[151] he outlines six theses that illustrate the relationship between narrative ethics with narrative form and narrative aesthetics. In the second of these theses Phelan argues that:

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[151] James Phelan, (2005) "Narrative Judgements and the Rhetorical Theory of Narrative: Ian McEwan's *Atonement*"

> *Readers make three main types of narrative judgement, each of which has the potential to overlap with or affect the other two: interpretive judgements about the nature of actions or other elements of the narrative, ethical judgements about the moral value of characters and actions, and aesthetic judgements about the artistic quality of the narrative and of its parts.*[152]

Phelan's three part model can be placed in parallel with those that have been examined previously. In this parallel what Phelan refers to as interpretive judgement aligns with the sjužet, the ego position of desire searching for that writerly instinctual satisfaction firstly characterised in this use of the word "adventure" with Doyle's texts. The aesthetic judgement is the position of authority of the fabula, the concluding narrative of the super-ego that defines itself as a complete readerly text, the sense that that promised desire of the title has been satisfied. What is important to the arguments above is that between these, acting as the motif in the seam, is the need to define the moral connections between the other two positions, and this is initially framed in terms of character. Our first point of access to morality with the Holmes texts is usually Watson and he commands a significant position in terms of reader satisfaction. It is not hard to see the parallels with this position and the moral conscience.

Phelan stresses this connection to the conscience/ motif function of the ethical dimension in the third thesis:

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[152] Phelan, p324

> *Individual narratives explicitly or more often implicitly establish their own ethical standards in order to guide their audiences to particular ethical judgements. Consequently, within rhetorical ethics, narrative judgements proceed from the inside out rather than the outside in. It is for this reason they are closely tied to aesthetic judgements.*[153]

Phelan argues that it is not the case that readers are applying an external ethical system to the text in hand but that this ethical definition comes about as a dimension of the process of reading the text itself. The ethical position will be an interpretive judgement interdependent with the aesthetic judgement that the text produces. The aesthetic judgement is concerned with an understanding of the artistic purpose that is desired from the position of the author in authority; the interpretive judgement is located in the position of the reader; the ethical judgement is the position of being in dialogue between the implied author and the implied reader in the process of the reading of the narrative.

As Phelan argues in thesis four:

> *Ethical judgements in narrative include not only the ones we make about the characters and their actions but also those we make about the ethics of storytelling itself, especially the ethics of the implied author's relation to the narrator, the characters, and the audience.*[154]

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[153] Phelan, p325

[154] Phelan, p326

There are two elements of this thesis that are of particular concern to the reader of detective fiction. Firstly, there is the issue of the "ethics of storytelling itself." There must always be a suspicion as to why a story is being told, a fact that Doyle in particular is clearly aware of with the qualifying exhortations of Watson that occupy the opening paragraphs of the Holmes stories. Readers are clearly made aware that it is the unique nature of the tale that makes this an important tale to be related. However, in texts, such as The Murder of Roger Ackroyd (1926) by Agatha Christie, the ethics of the story being related become more ambiguous and uncomfortable as the text increasingly assumes the form of a protracted suicide note.

This leads to the second issue raised by this thesis which is the "implied author's relation to the narrator, the characters, and the audience." It is in this that the ethics of the telling assumes certain condition of narrative form that the reader can only assume are directed for a clear purpose. One clear technique that arises here is the use of paralipsis. In this light the reader is aware that the narrative voice is more knowledgeable than s/he is being allowed access to, as such s/he is instinctively placed in a position of the dialectic of desire. Readers have been tempted with the drive to discover what it is that still remains hidden, deliberately omitted at this point of time, and are still to be revealed, that which is ethically ambiguous needs to be defined with satisfactory clarity. There is a return to the arguments presented by Barthes in The Pleasure of the Text where the same dynamic in the seam is presented as a function of narrative, but the definition of the achievement of jouissance is redefined to a more specific ethical dimension that draws closer resemblance to Barthes' seam and Shklovsky's motif, and by extension Freud's moral conscience.

To take as an illustrative example "The Adventure of the Speckled Band": the opening paragraph contains features that are common to many of the Sherlock Holmes

stories. The reader is presented with the implied author of Dr. Watson who explains why this story in particular is to be related at this time:

> Of all these varied cases, however, I cannot recall any which presented more singular features than that which was associated with the well-known Surrey family of the Roylotts of Stoke Moran.[155]

With the ambiguity of the title already presenting the potential for duality of narrative this builds up the anticipation through a number of methods. Firstly, the reader is told that the tale that will be related is one of "singular features" that give it precedence at this time over a further "seventy odd" cases that Watson has recorded. This is a similar technique to Poe having the Prefect refer to the case of the "Purloined" letter as being both "simple" and "odd". The word "singular" has the narrative duality of the motif as pun because the reader can understand it as being either "unique", which appeals to the aesthetic side of the dialogue, but also as "monologic" in that there is a straightforward solution that is not open to interpretation, which appeals to the ethical. The dialogue of the moral conscience is set into play by this word as the reader is desirous to understand which of these definitions will be the one revealed, whilst also being desirous that the said solution will coinhere both sides at a point of jouissance. The sense of priority, of the need for this story to be known here and now, exaggerates this effect.

This is followed by a further instance of defamiliarisation, the reference to the "well-known Surrey family of the Roylotts of Stoke Moran". Doyle uses the reader's desire

[155] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, (1892) "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" p257.

to offer an influencing ethical position by inferring an implied reader. The narrator is implying awareness in the reader that places them in a social position: in what way are the Roylotts "well-known"? If they are "well-known" should this be a case that has similarities with something that the reader has heard about? The implication suggests that the distinction between fiction and reality is blurred: the reader knows it is a fictional narrative but socially, and therefore with the ethics of that social group, the reader feels s/he should be in the know. The reader as a result is placed in the position of defining reading from this point through the interpretation of events based upon what s/he knows about "well-known Surrey" families and the implied moral position s/he should have about such. This offers a further element to the word "singular", "singular" not just as features of detective fiction but also as features of "Surrey family" life. Although not explicitly a pun the reader can see that the language tropes of this text offer signifying motifs that are designed to create the duality of narrative which allow for the immersion in the text in a writerly way.

Although Barthes argues that there is an ultimate moment of jouissance, there are also smaller moments within an extended narrative where the seam is found to be present. This is true of Shklovsky's theory as well. The fabula is an ultimate theme as it is formed of and forms a chain of signification that links Watson's phrases into an anticipatory whole as a paragraph. The motif further offers themes through the individual role of significance every sentence can be said to hold; every word has the theme of the signified that could later pay off at a point of jouissance. It would be rare that this degree of analysis would be needed but the potential must be accepted. Shklovsky summons up Saussure to suggest that on each sentence level, perhaps even phrase or word, there is the potential within the meaning for pun and this would indicate a motif function as there would be a duality of meaning. The dynamic of the causality of the text is through the use of these different

moments of jouissance at different levels of language that build toward the ultimate jouissance of the denouement. I return to my analysis of the first epigram of Barthes work: the use of capitals in that first word "THE" creates a motif effect, a pun on authority, which allows the reader to be aware that s/he is reading a dialectical text. There is an authority being enforced here by the typography, a super-ego expressing an authoritative reading that is dialectically challenging the reader to find instinctual satisfaction. As Fredric Jameson identified:

> Shklovsky's famous definition of art as a defamiliarisation, a making strange (*ostranenie*) of objects, a renewal of perception, takes the form of a psychological law with profound ethical implications… Art is in this context a way of restoring conscious experience, of breaking through deadening and mechanical habits of conduct (*automatization*, as the Czech Formalists will later call it), and allowing us to be reborn to the world in its existential freshness and horror.[156]

The reader is aware of this dialectic because s/he recognises the motif. The greater signified dimension in the seam is creating a moral conscience reaction as well, a potential ethical dimension to reading.

The theme of a motif is simple, the theme of a fabula is complex and for Shklovsky the point at which artistry lies. This means that the fabula is the final realisation of the artistic purpose of a work, the moment of ultimate jouissance, the point in the Holmes story where we realise not only the full significance of the anticipatory lures that Watson has

[156] Fredric Jameson, (1972) The Prison-House of Language, pp50-1

offered us in the opening paragraph but also the full significance of the phrase "the Speckled Band". The motifs in themselves are not necessarily able to uncover this fabula, what is needed is a causal relationship between these smaller thematic elements that make it possible for the reader to connect with the work. This is the purpose of sjužet.

This distinction is extremely relevant, but as Shklovsky states, one that is often misunderstood:

> The idea of *plot* is too often confused with the description of events– with what I propose provisionally to call the *story*. The story is, in fact, only material for plot formulation. The plot of *Evgeny Onegin* is, therefore, not the romance of the hero with Tatyana, but the fashioning of the subject of this story as produced by the interrupting digressions. One sharp-witted artist (Vladimir Miklashevsky) proposed to illustrate *Evgeny Onegin* mainly through the digressions (the "small feet," for example); considering it as a composition of motifs, such a treatment would be proper.[157]

From the point of view of the defamiliarising pun, each character and action is now defined as an extension of this defamiliarisation and how it can in turn lead to an explanation of the truth in the play on words or actions. The pun is the dialectic of desire for x which Barthes illustrated. As Shklovsky argues, the sjužet is the material for the formulation of the fabula. What the motif as pun, as the representation of the seam/moral conscience, achieves is the

[157] Viktor Shklovsky, (1921) "Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*: Stylistic Commentary", trans Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (1965) p57.

point where these two functions are linked and brought in to define each other whilst still retaining their independent and separate states. The desire is simultaneously represented in the destabilising puns as being both the need for the fabula and the need for the sjužet that is necessary to uncover this fabula.

For Shklovsky sjužet represents a sentence in its causal purpose: the fabula is the meaning of the sentence, the motifs the individual words. As he states:

> Thus, to be a true "story," it must have not only action but counteraction as well (i.e., some kind of incongruity). This reveals a certain affinity between a "motif" and a trope (e.g., a pun). As I have already said in the chapter on erotic enstrangement, the plot lines of erotic tales represent extended metaphors (e.g., the male and female sexual organs are compared in Boccaccio with the pestle and mortar). This comparison is motivated by the entire story, giving rise thereby to a "motif."[158]

Motif as pun is for Shklovsky the essence of the laying bare of the process of creativity, the dialectic of desire for x, and it is unsurprising to find that like Barthes' point of jouissance or Freud's daydream, this is characterised by the way in which it can articulate the erotic moment. What pun necessitates is a need for the reader to become engaged with the text. For Shklovsky it is, like Freud and Auden, the "fantasy" which we must recognise is present that is important in the experience, it is as follows:

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[158] Viktor Shklovsky, (1925) Theory of Prose, p53

> The purpose of the image is not to draw our understanding closer to that which the image stands for, but rather to allow us to perceive the object in a special way, in short, to lead us to a "vision" of this object rather than mere "recognition".[159]

Part of that inherent necessity is the need to find the "truth", to define which meaning is the "true" one that will allow for a full understanding: "The sense of completeness, of a finished state, derives from the fact that the narrative moves from a false recognition to a revelation of the true state of affairs (i.e., the formula is realised)."[160] This raises a further definition of the motif as pun as a parallel to the concepts of seam and conscience, those inexpressible moments of understanding that there is a metonymic meeting between the sjužet and fabula, ego and super-ego. The truth of the "vision" of Shklovsky is the jouissance of Barthes; either way it takes us back to Barthes' definition that jouissance is the moment of becoming.

"The Adventure of the Speckled Band" is a locked-room mystery, a form that inherently includes the ludic quality that Barthes argued as being an important aspect of the reading experience. What is more, the locked-room narrative appeals to the dialogue of the moral conscience. For a locked-room mystery to be successful, the reader is placed in a position where s/he is allowed the creative experience of positing possible solutions as to how such a crime can be committed. The sjužet offers possibilities through the textual exploration with each motif adding to the chain of signification that allows for continuing developments which confirm or deny the reader's writerly conjecture. This is a process that

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[159] Shklovsky, p10

[160] Shklovsky, p56

strongly appeals to the aesthetic reader as a working out of the solution affirms the creative sensibility. It is also a condition of the locked-room mystery that the solution will be singular and revealed in the denouement. This is the readerly position of the fabula and appeals to the ethical side of the dialogue in the moral conscience. A successful locked-room mystery will create the jouissance of coinherence in the aesthetic and ethical sides of the dialogue, both being satisfied in their desire for x by the solution given.

Watson proceeds to offer a detailed history of the Roylott family and in particular a Dr. Roylott who is the guardian of the two twin daughters of his late wife. The ethical position of the implied author, in relation to the implied reader, results in a narrative where Dr. Roylott is portrayed as an eccentric. The reader is informed that this eccentricity is manifested in his habit of keeping wild animals on the grounds: "I think that I mentioned to you that the doctor kept a cheetah and a baboon. We had no feeling of security unless our doors were locked."[161] This is in reported speech, not the direct opinion of Watson. It is an indirect representation of Dr Roylott through the reportage of Watson whose tendency to condense narrative makes us suspicious about the facts being prone to selection.

Doyle is deliberately challenging the informed reader at this stage with the potential for false lures. The reader is expecting something "singular" thus such an apparent misdirection towards the forms predecessor, the aforementioned "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", serves to incline the reader to not jump to immediate conclusions in the case of this particular story. The dissatisfaction felt by readers with that previous locked-room mystery's denouement is an important contributing factor to such an inclination. This piece of misdirection is in fact a double bluff as a motif: the denouement has more of a

[161] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, (1892) "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" p261

connection with “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” than the reader is here expected to believe.

The ethical position of the implied author has been such that the reader is already aware of the role of the motif in the text as a means to facilitate the dialogue of the moral conscience before being returned to the title’s signifier. The reader is presented with the central motif pun of the signifier in a further piece of reported speech from Watson. By making it reported speech the reader is placed in an innocent position, with the tendentious nature of the accusation being positioned in a different ethical context to that which has immediate effect. As one of the twin step daughters of Dr Roylott, Helen Stoner, relates the death scene of her sister Julia: “At first I thought that she had not recognised me, but as I bent over her she suddenly shrieked out in a voice that I will never forget, “Oh, my God! Helen! It was the band! The speckled band!”””[162] Already loaded with relevance through being the signifier in the title, the phrase “The speckled band!” is now further emphasised as a central element of the plot through being placed as the exclaimed dying words of the murder victim.

If the reader is placed in an innocent position the question arises as to why such a narrative construction should evoke a sense of guilt? There is an intrigue in the locked-room nature of the crime scene and the ambiguous nature of the phrase, linked with the reader’s anticipation for it to occur that has been present since the title, which creates a certain jouissance in the ethical positioning. Firstly the reader feels guilt because the anticipated event is linked with death, the exclamation marks reflecting the reader’s own exclamation at this occurrence. Further, the reader is imbued with questions: is the victim

[162] Doyle, p262.

the victim of murder? If so, how was it committed in a locked-room? These in turn appeal to the ethical and aesthetic respectively. We want to know that the death has a reason in order to satisfy the guilt felt through the jouissance of the signifier being linked to events. Secondly, the reader's aesthetic interest in the possibilities of the locked-room mystery aligns with the perpetrator of this privation, creating a sense of sin.

The variation on earlier locked-room mysteries that Doyle has added here is that he answers both of these questions within this phrase. The accusation tells us the death is murder, or at least the result of some external influence. The phrase "The speckled band!" gives the reader a culprit. The phrase takes on the role of a defamiliarising motif that presents the reader with the potential for a chain of signification. The confirmation of the signifier as defamiliarising motif creates a narrative event Shklovsky describes as being the process where "By 'estranging' objects and complicating form, the device of art makes perception long and 'laborious. '"[163]

Doyle achieves further ambiguity with additional marginal detail that can be identified as motifs, through the use of the wording in the phrase itself: "It was the band! The speckled band!" Prior to the use of the defining adjective "speckled" the reader is informed it "was the band", and this works to indicate the element of pun as motif as an identifier of multiplicity. There is potential for writerly creation in this structure: what definition of "band" are we to take from this homonym? What further connotation is added by the use of the word "was"? Do these contextually, when coupled with the previous misdirection of the use of animals in the genre, direct the reader towards the definition of "band" as to mean "group"?

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[163] Viktor Shklovsky, (1925) Theory of Prose, p20

Presented with such ambiguity, and aesthetic potential, the ethical dimension to which the reader is drawn, is in "speckled", the word that seems to be less loaded with multiple interpretations. It is in this word that Doyle is more subtle in his play on words and offers the more affected example of motif as lure. If the reader takes the common, colloquial definition of "speckled", that is, to use our "folk etymology" to define this word, s/he is drawn towards the belief that the word refers to anything that is covered in spots. Doyle allows much of the misdirection of the remainder of the story to rest upon the false lure of the group of Gypsies who were living near the house at the time and their habit of wearing spotted handkerchiefs.

Like "The Purloined Letter" the false lure is through the failure to pay attention to the correct aspect of the crime. The true culprit of the crime is the more obvious one throughout:

> "Were there gypsies in the plantation at the time?"
>
> "Yes, there are nearly always some there."
>
> "Ah, and what did you gather from this allusion to a band- a speckled band?"
>
> "Sometimes I have thought that it was merely the wild talk of delirium, sometimes that it may have referred to some band of people, perhaps to these very gypsies in the plantation. I do not know whether the spotted handkerchiefs which so many of them wear over their heads might have suggested the strange adjective which she used."[164]

[164] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, (1892) "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" pp262-3

Like Dupin probing the prefect on the nature of his investigation in “The Purloined Letter”, it is Holmes who adopting a tendentious role introduces the suggestion of Gypsies to Miss Stoner. When asked the second question in the above passage, that which includes the signifier, the reader, like Miss Stoner, is led by the moral positioning of the text to trust that Holmes may be on to something and adapt the response to assume a connection that has not actually been made. In the context of the text there is little justification for the query about Gypsies as they are at best a distant presence within the grounds of the Roylott’s household. The fact that they do not feature within the internal domestic world of a text that is concerned with a locked-room should in itself negate their potential for true suspicion. That Holmes puts forward the possibility of their guilt is Doyle challenging the ethical position of his readers with what is effectively a pun upon estrangement within society. At the time of writing it would have been common for the readership to have a prejudice against Gypsies and jump to negative conclusions, but, even for a modern readership, such is the condensation of the text that the reader assumes one question to indirectly refer to the other. Watson’s presentation of Holmes’ obvious interest in an external “group” leads the reader to define the word “band” in terms of the Gypsies, only for Helen Stoner to further justify “speckled” to confirm the false lure.

This solution of the Gypsies is unsatisfactory to the reader as it does not create the necessary feeling of jouissance. If the Gypsies were the culprits this would be an act at random and this is not aesthetically satisfying. Similarly, this also plays to the ethical side, for this solution to be acceptable it would mean that the ethical side of the dialogue would have to accept a solution based upon prejudice which only allows for further feelings of guilt whilst similarly being aesthetically unsatisfactory. Doyle is secure in his use of

misdirection because he is aware of the fact that for the reader the true solution for the locked-room mystery is not at this point accessible.

There is a strong counter-argument, using the particularly distinctive role of the seam as a point of conscience, which allows discussion of a plurality of the nature of the jouissance effect in these texts. As Shklovsky suggests, one issue is the potential for more than one parallel structure working simultaneously. The pluralism in the dialogic process in the seam is such that readers may be trying to meet more than one desire at any given point. Jouissance in itself may be too broad as a singular term and would benefit from being seen as potentially multiple in itself with moral conscience being just one dimension, the ethical dimension, of the desire that readers wish to have brought to conclusion: "In the mystery story and mystery novel, on the other hand, we're dealing not with a comparison of objects but with the displacement of one object by another."[165]

Such pluralism is at the heart of the structure of the genre because not only are readers finding a single dialectic of desire but frequently moving between simultaneous dialectics of desire that displace each other in the seam, different elements of the jouissance. Shklovsky states within the opening of his chapter "Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery Story"[166]:

> Built on several parallel lines of narration, the effects of surprise are achieved by the fact that while one plot line progresses, the other one may proceed at the same or even quicker tempo, during which we cross over to another narrative line,

[165] Viktor Shklovsky (1925) Theory of Prose, pp120-1

[166] Shklovsky, pp101-116

> preserving all the while the time of the first line; that is, we find ourselves among consequences whose causes are unknown to us.[167]

The estrangement at the heart of the motif is here brought to a point where it is also defamiliarised in the seam. By focusing upon the Gypsies as a possible solution, "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" creates a dialogue that displaces the reader's attention from the true path to the denouement whilst simultaneously necessitating that that path will be achieved through the frustration created by the realisation that this displacement has occurred.

In following the narrative of the threat of the Gypsies Doyle allows his reader, and an assumption of late Victorian prejudice, to aesthetically play with the idea of a different solution to the story of "The Adventure of the Speckled Band". The reader strives to find jouissance in whatever motif is presented as a lure. What allows Doyle to indulge in this free narrative is his certainty that his bound narrative, the logical denouement to the locked-room mystery, is such that his narrative line will be satisfactorily returned to by the reader as the true line to follow. What this allows for in the Freudian model is the dialectical duality of having a narrative that is driven by the authoritative super-ego unfolding alongside a narrative that allows for more instinctual satisfaction for the ego. It is the reader's moral conscience that allows interpretation of the common links of those elements that s/he accepts as moments of jouissance as they concur with the ethical and aesthetic understanding in relation to both states of mind. The Gypsies neither fit the reader's aesthetic understanding of the locked-room, as there appears to be no means for a human to

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[167] Shklovsky, p101

have entered, nor the ethical understanding as the reader is aware that their guilt has been framed as knee-jerk ethnic prejudice. The lack of satisfaction makes the reader realise that s/he is the victim of tendentious misdirection, but, as this has been attributed to Holmes, the reader is still in the ethical position of feeling that this was for a moral purpose.

To return to the role of the "folk etymology" in the definition of the word "speckled" as a motif. The dictionary definition of the word states that the conditions for something to be "speckled" are more precise than for it simply to be spotted: "Speck, esp. one of many markings on skin."[168] This connotation of skin offers an element of the definition that is vitally important to the final denouement:

> "The band! The speckled band!" whispered Holmes.
>
> I took a step forward. In an instant his strange headgear began to move, and there reared itself from among his hair the squat diamond-shaped head and puffed neck of a loathsome serpent.
>
> "It is a swamp adder!" cried Holmes.[169]

As with "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" the solution to the locked-room mystery rests upon the use of the abilities of an animal to get into the locked-room when a human cannot. Most readers have followed Doyle's false lures created through the use of pun as motif. The whole of the story rests upon the fact that at her death Julia Stoner is not more precise in her description of her means of death. Had she stated "the snake" as the signifier, or even

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[168] The Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1984)

[169] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, (1892) "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" p272.

drawn attention to “the bell cord”, the animal’s means of entrance, then the solution would have been readier to hand. Doyle makes it clear that this ambiguity is rooted in the context of the terror in which it was uttered, yet again stressing the importance of the exclamation mark. The reader can see how in this instance it is the specific use of the pun as motif that not only creates false lures directing us away from previously envisioned detective solutions, but also the pun is that upon which the whole of the structuring of the mystery is designed. It is the defamiliarisation of the phrase that specifically establishes the story and how it is developed.

Derek Attridge sees this role of homonymy as a motivating force as being important to our understanding of how theories which try to reclaim the position of history within our literary understanding, such as those of Shklovsky. Critics such as Jameson have attempted to portray the linguistic models of Saussure as being a rejection of the role of history from literary theory; Attridge, however, states that a different approach can be adopted through using Jean Paulhan’s reassessment of Saussure:

> But having banished etymology from the realms of logic and science, he [Paulhan] welcomes it instead in a different realm (and one which perhaps subsumes those of logic and science): the realm of rhetoric, where it has a subtle and scintillating role to play. Its rhetorical partner, from which it’s sometimes indistinguishable, is the *calembour* or *paronomasia*, the play on words. In both devices, the same process occurs: two similar-sounding but distinct signifiers are brought together, and the surface relationship between them invested with meaning through the inventiveness and rhetorical skill of the writer. If that meaning is in the form of a postulated connection between present and past, what we have is etymology; if it’s in the form

> of a postulated connection within the present, the result is word-play. Word-play, in other words, is to etymology as synchrony is to diachrony.[170]

What is in evidence here is that not only is the role of the pun at the centre of the story function but it is also central to Shklovsky's reintegration of history. There is a direct parallel between Paulhan's concept of the meeting of "two similar-sounding but distinct signifiers" and what Shklovsky referred to as the "affinity between a 'motif' and a trope". Taken together, this suggests that if a reader is motivated by etymology, a need to discover a meaning that is in part historical, then s/he will be attuned to the need to identify the presence of pun. Contained within this is the double potential: tied within every understanding of that which is past, what readers discover is an equal potential for an understanding of the present– and, in turn, it must be noted, future– understanding. There is a parallel to Freud's understanding of the daydream offering the "past, present and future" simultaneously, yet the reduction to a singular word serves to focalise the signification of such moments. In this readers can see that the need to "lay bare" the device that defamiliarisation necessitates will always contain the potential for the "proximity of touch", the sense of "truth".

Attridge states that this is not just fundamentally important for the understanding of Shklovsky, but also as an understanding as to how these ideas build into the post-structuralist model in general through reference to Vico, Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Barthes and Derrida:

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[170] Derek Attridge, (1987) "Language as history/ history as language: Saussure and the romance of etymology", p193.

> Recognising the impossibility of a detached and objective science of language, which observes and describes without altering the object of its attention, in a metalanguage wholly independent of the language it is discussing, they intervene– they offer, if you like, their own folk etymologies– to make manifest the instability of language, to demonstrate the diachronic density within any synchronic state, to present language as always open to reinterpretation and change.[171]

This echoes Shklovsky's argument that "*The new form makes its appearance not in order to express a new content, but rather, to replace an old form that has already outlived its artistic usefulness.*"[172] Attridge argues that there is no objective science of language that means that every utterance will always be referential in the same way, but that there is the potential of a distinct understanding in each instance. As Shklovsky states, each new version, "new form", is effectively a performance of the "folk etymology", the reader is challenged, is motivated, by the need to "lay bare" this new version and interpret it from their own perspective. Uncertainty is central to the reading experience as it is within this uncertainty that readers become aware of the fact that there is dialogue. To be uncertain suggests that questions must be asked in order to identify solutions. This prolonging reflects the erotic experience framed in Barthes' jouissance or Freud's daydream. There is a paradox in desiring both the mystery and solution simultaneously, wanting to come and become at once.

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[171] Attridge, p203

[172] Viktor Shklovsky (1925) Theory of Prose, p20

CHAPTER FOUR: THE JOKE OF THE MOONSTONE

The dialectic of the implied author and implied reader has been central to the construction of detective fiction. In terms of the implied author we are aware of the construction of narrators who offer a separation between the detective and the reader as well as narrators in the detective position who in themselves offer a separation between their articulated thoughts and an unconscious mental working to a solution.

In Who Killed Roger Ackroyd?[173] Pierre Bayard focuses upon the first person narrative in detective fiction with a particular emphasis on the way in which these narratives present themselves to perception of truth. It is the case, Bayard argues, that there will always be in some degree an element of omission in the way in which any detective text is presented. There will always be a dialectical dimension to the way in which the hermeneutic code is being presented to readers through paralipsis. As Bayard states: "*All mystery fiction in effect implies the narrator's bad faith*".[174] A perfect illustration of this bad faith is Doyle having Watson still keep the mystery in the unfolding of the narrative, a narrating voice that presents only a level of understanding equivalent to that which he had at the time of events. Bayard's particular choice of The Murder of Roger Ackroyd[175] is a deliberate illustration of the most extreme bad faith as the narrating voice of Dr Shepherd holds back the singular most important piece of truth in that he is in fact the person who committed the crime.

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[173] Pierre Bayard, (1998) Who Killed Roger Ackroyd?

[174] Bayard, p54

[175] Agatha Christie (1926) The Murder Of Roger Ackroyd

Bayard stresses that rather than resenting this omission, this is exactly why readers read this kind of text. As Barthes does, Bayard stresses the importance of the ludic quality in the process of reading: readers read these texts because they are aware of the fact that they are uncertain of the truth. The idea of moral conscience as a specific interpretation of jouissance in these texts lies in the fact that readers are narratively putting themselves in positions where they are expecting to be presented with ambiguity in the hermeneutic code. The performance of the moral conscience is in the reader placing her/his own sense of both guilt and authority in dialectical relation with the potential truth/untruth of the narrative to allow the moral conscience to present them with a narrative that satisfies their perception of what these things should be.

"The Adventure of the Lion's Mane"[176] has the distinction of being, with "The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier", one of only two stories in the Sherlock Holmes series that is narrated by the detective rather than Dr. Watson who makes no appearance. This raises the question of the purpose of Watson and why his specific role is considered to be surplus to requirement. "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane" is a similar construction to "The Adventure of the Speckled Band". In addition to the defamiliarisation of the motif as pun rooted in the signifier "speckled band" in the title, the reader is presented with a character who utters the signifier as a phrase in their dying words. The mystery is once more centred on the chain of signification that explores the definition of this phrase. It is a perfect example of how subtle variation can change the content of the text even though the form is ostensibly the same.

[176] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, (1927) "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane"

In typical Holmes stories Watson acts as the avatar between the detective and the reader, the innocent focus that protects the reader from the direct presence of the tendentious. As Holmes rarely discloses his thought processes to Watson, Watson's condensation and indirect representation is excused through his not being in the know, a position adopted as sleight of hand by an implied author writing after the fact. Watson becomes the source of the misdirection that Doyle places in his stories; he is the riddle-teller in that it is his narrative style as much as the reported events that offer the need for solution from Holmes. Shklovsky refers to this as narrative parallelism. On one line of the story, the one most apparent to the reader, is offered the solutions of Watson, on another parallel line of the story there is the formulation of Holmes that is only revealed at the denouement. The former is the sjužet enacted in an anthropomorphic figure, the second the fabula presented similarly. The voice of the implied author, the Watson narrating from a future point, is the characterised motif, making the links between these two narrative strands of the deductive formulation.

The pun as the central characteristic of motif is the plural moment that is parallel to moral conscience and seam. As Shklovsky illustrates, it is the point of understanding on the part of the reader that there is a duality in the process and it is in the acceptance of this duality, in this middle function of the motif, that readers accept the dialectic of the fabula and sjužet. Shklovsky identifies the metonymic function of the pun strengthening this contention by expressing a specific means through which this device can be used: "At first, the crime is presented as a riddle. Then, a detective appears on the scene as a professional riddle-solver."[177] More complex than the pun itself, the "riddle" derives its complexity from

[177] Viktor Shklovsky, (1925) Theory of Prose, p103

the reaction of those other elements in the narrative to the presence of the pun at the heart of the text offering a multiplicity of interpretation for the detective that s/he must interpret into a singular narrative conclusion. The "riddle" represents a distinct form of motif as it is from the start imbued with the sense of the need to be unravelled, for the multiplicity to be laid bare. The search for those elements in the reading process that offer the connecting metonymy within the story construction is thus brought to the forefront of the narrative drawing particular attention to those elements that have the potential for being puns. In the introductory paragraph of "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" Watson makes the reader aware that there is a punchline to the story that is known and will be revealed and throughout the story Holmes is met with multiple characters who offer their own interpretation to the central pun, further complicating the pun into riddle. It is necessary for the success of the misdirection of "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" that the reader has this narrative parallelism as it allows for the formulation of the riddle and the desire to uncover the solution.

In "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane" the reader is told the thought processes of Holmes first hand. This apparent lack of narrative parallelism in itself offers the "estranging" of form as it removes the sense of safety that comes from belief that there is a figure in the know. The opening dramatic event of this story is strangely resonant of "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" except that Holmes witnesses it first hand:

> He was obviously dying. Those glazed sunken eyes and dreadful livid cheeks could mean nothing else. One glimmer of life came into his face for an instant, and he uttered two or three words with an eager air of warning. They were slurred and indistinct, but to my ear the last of them, which burst in a shriek from his lips, were

> "the Lion's Mane." It was utterly irrelevant and unintelligible, and yet I could twist the sound into no other sense.[178]

Whereas there is some sense of doubt that Holmes heard the words correctly, the reader is told that other meanings are beyond Holmes. This in itself offers defamiliarisation. As with "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" Doyle is expecting the reader to follow Holmes' suggestions. If the great detective can interpret the utterance no other way than there is no other way to interpret it, the phrase is left to stand alone, "the Lion's Mane" remains a motif that has little of the aesthetic appeal to create.

Where "The Speckled Band!" as an exclamation was loaded with ambiguity the defamiliarisation in this text rests in the fact that there is no obvious alternative interpretation of the phrase "the Lion's Mane" except to indicate the mane of a lion which does not hold with the context of the story. There is still the aesthetic appeal to the reader in this singular interpretation. Such is the extreme nature of the idea of there being a wild lion on the Sussex coast that the reader cannot help but become caught in the other signifier of the title, the word "adventure". Such an occurrence promises a piece of adventurous action in the latter stages of the narrative and it is on this that the reader's anticipatory desire focuses. This raises doubt in the reader's mind as to whether this text is a detective text or a picaresque and it is in the placing of such doubts that Doyle is able to create the similar effect of uncertainty that is offered by Watson.

The victim, school teacher Fitzroy McPherson, has been swimming in the rock pools near Holmes' retirement home on the Sussex coast. That this is not a locked-room

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[178] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, (1927) "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane" p1084.

mystery is vitally important. The contradiction in the misdirection of "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" was in the fact that the room was impenetrable to humans; the notion of a "band" of Gypsies being responsible was incongruous even when it was the widely held belief. In the context of the open spaces illustrated within "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane" the potential is there for any possibility. The ethical side of the dialogue in the reader's moral conscience becomes a significant aspect of the reaction to the text. In the same way that the aesthetic is locked down in a singular reading, the state of the ethical in the locked-room's singular solution, so it is that the ethical is destabilised by the freedom to suspect all on the moral grounds of their aesthetic potential.

This inversion of the previous story, whilst using a similar device, illustrates the variance of possibilities that the genre allows for. Doyle deliberately layers the absurdity in the mind of the reader that the reference could be to do with an actual lion by using the reader's knowledge of the possibilities in this context. Firstly, the reader does not expect lion attacks in Sussex. Secondly, even if a lion were escaped from somewhere, the rock pools of the coast seem a strange place for it to be. Finally, why would the victim specifically reference the "mane" rather than claws or teeth which the reader would more readily associate with lion attacks? The array of false, seemingly bathetic, lures offers a range of complexity and misdirection that is comparable to the equally absurd idea that the Gypsies could have entered the locked-room in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band".

The narrative parallelism becomes rooted in Holmes alone, who suspects that he is aware of the true definition but is as yet not revealing the correct contextual solution, he is essentially misdirecting himself through the condensation of his own memory. This comes through the motifs of the death of a second victim, McPherson's dog, and a near third, Ian

Murdoch the main suspect, being both attacked by the rock pool. Holmes eventually hits upon the true definition of the phrase:

> "I am an omnivorous reader with a strangely retentive memory for trifles. That phrase "the Lion's Mane" haunted my mind. I knew that I had seen it somewhere in an unexpected context. You have seen that it does describe the creature. I have no doubt it was floating on the water when McPherson saw it, and that this phrase was the only one by which he could convey to us a warning as to the creature which had been his death."[179]

As someone being in a state of fear allowed for the phrase to be overly ambiguous in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band," so the context of the phrase being uttered by an educated man with an over-precise understanding of the subspecies of Jellyfish leads to the story resting on a signifier motif that is rooted in synonym. The point about the phrase "the Lion's Mane" is that it is not ambiguous at all; it is simply a colloquial term for a subspecies. Rather than allowing the reader to be misdirected by offering alternate solutions, the device used here is a reliance on the reader's ignorance of such matters, made all the more palpable by making Holmes, for much of the story, equally ignorant. The folk etymology is acting as the means of condensation within the central pun of the phrase. That this is an academic form of folk etymology that allows McPherson to condense his knowledge to a single genus only serves to indicate the potentiality for variation that the genre allows.

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[179] Doyle, p1094.

There is a sense that "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane" is not a true detective text because, like "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," the solution rests upon the animal culprit. Jacques Derrida explores how the use of the animal culprit could be problematic in stories such as these, in his seminar The Beast and the Sovereign:

> For the current representation, to which we are referring for a start, sovereign and beast seem to have in common their being-outside-the-law. It is as though both of them were situated by definition at a distance from or above the laws, in nonrespect for the absolute law, the absolute law that they make or that they are but that they do not have to respect.[180]

Will the reader accept a beast as the perpetrator of a death as a satisfactory moment of jouissance that will allow for a commonality in the aesthetic and ethical nature of reading a detective text? There is a real question over the ethical dimension of the reading experience as the beast is outside of the law. This is not the same as "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" or that most famous of Holmes stories to involve a beast: The Hound of the Baskervilles. In both texts the beast was directed by human design, the beast was the tool to the crime. In "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane" there is no crime per se. The word "adventure" is particularly apt here as the reader has seen the adventurous pursuit but there appears to have been no real ethical denouement. Even the aesthetic dimension seems diminished as it is a cold, logical process of replacement that offers the solution.

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[180] Jacques Derrida (2009) The Beast and the Sovereign trans. Geoffrey Bennington, ed. Michel Lisse, Marie-Louise Mallet, and Ginette Michaud p17

This leads back to the text being narrated by Holmes, and to the other figure in Derrida's conclusions concerning those who are "being-outside-the-law", the sovereign. By removing the subjectivity of Watson the reader is party to far more of the thought-processes of Holmes than usual. By removing the barrier from Holmes the reader has also removed his superiority, his role as the sovereign of the text. What is subtle about this text, which is not really about a murder, is that readers are never really presented with a detective in the classical sense; rather the narrator is someone struggling desperately hard to remember a nagging memory. What is important is what rests upon the restitution of this memory. "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane" is a text that is important for realisation concerning where the truth of enjoyment within the Holmes stories lies. The reader is desirous for that criminal element, but equally desirous for any punishment to be justified. McPherson is an acceptable victim of the Jellyfish because of his previous cruel actions, but there is no justification for his death to lead to further punishment. Central to this is the statement from Holmes that he did not "think" suggesting that he simply accepted that what was presented was murder. There is a certain irony in the idea that readers are presented with the fallibility of the detective in their inability to not assume the detective role and ascribe a crime to the given situation. Holmes has achieved no great feat of deduction; he has simply remembered a fact, but that fact has been remembered at the correct time.

This raises an important question as to how the reader's interaction with the detective figure within a text adds to the understanding of the moral conscience as it is explored in the given text. The moral conscience is not really explored in the crime of "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane" because the death is not a moral story, simply one of a tragic accident. The exploration of the guilty society surrounding the crime scene is no

mere distraction but an essential means through which to explore the moral centre of Holmes as a detective character.

It is the reader's acknowledgement of intuitive awareness that allows the metarepresentational ability of detective fiction to fulfil its true purpose. Readers are presented with a narrative that is instructing them to disbelieve what they are aware that they are coming intuitively to believe this, then, reflects the duality of narrative presented by Shklovsky and Barthes:

> In this respect, detective narratives may be said to parasitize on our metarepresentational ability: they stimulate it without providing the kind of "educational" benefit that we still implicitly look for in what we read, delight they do, but instruct they don't, or at least not in the traditional sense of the word *instruction*.[181]

The different form of instruction Lisa Zunshine alludes to is a form of mind reading that is facilitated through the process of reading detective fiction. Zunshine argues that the authors of detective fiction play with the cognitive ability to store information under advisement and that this facilitates any reading as being a process of experimental cognitive challenges of negotiating and redirecting the reader's metarepresentational ability to understand the narrative definition of that played out in front of them. Zunshine suggests that detective stories "tease" the cognitive capacity in order to make readers store one narrative only to

[181] Lisa Zunshine, (2006) Why we Read Fiction, p125

then return to it in reinterpretation, reflecting the roles of the sjužet and fabula in Shklovsky. She further argues:

> On the other hand, storing information under advisement, particularly if the information concerns one character's manipulation of the state of mind of other characters, could be cognitively "expensive" because lying does not simply add an extra level of intentionality to the given situation. Instead, it frequently has a "cascading" effect, demanding from us readjustment of what we know about other characters' knowledge, the knowledge that they in turn may have used to influence the states of minds of other characters, and so forth. Thus, a story whose premise is that "everybody could be lying" is a narrative minefield, and turning it into an enjoyable reading experience may require a particular set of formal adjustments.[182]

Readers are presented with a narrative that is characterised by its paralipsis. This is a paralipsis that readers are aware of and expecting. Readers do not trust the narration at the point of the event but expect eventually to be placed in a position where they will be allowed to re-evaluate their narrative perception in order to understand the reasons for the paralipsis as moments of jouissance. This provides readers with an interesting narrative position where they are confirmed in their awareness of the unreliability of the narrator in the given moment of reading whilst being simultaneously aware of the concluding reliability of the narrative. The detective text is the conscious awareness of the sjužet and fabula in process, the paralipsis being the defining motif that is necessary.

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[182] Zunshine, p132.

It is the position of conscience that makes us aware of the fact that a further, larger paralipsis, the identification of a balanced commonality between the desires of the aesthetic and the ethical, must come after these smaller, momentary cascades of jouissance. In the case of the short story, or even the text of the singular narrator, such momentary cascades of jouissance are held in balance and focus as the reader is only ever involved with one aspect of unreliability that forms a connective chain throughout the text. If the paralipsis of Holmes has been open to question throughout "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane" it has been equally reflected in a continual tone of self doubt within Holmes himself. This doubt has been the doubt of the riddle-solver posed with a problem that he is frustrated with. This paralipsis becomes more complex in the narrative that offers multiple perspectives, where the doubt for the reader lies not just within the single character voice but through the outward challenges from other characters. This form of narrative raises questions over the sense of the riddle itself, as other characters doubt the riddle's existence as the problem to the singular entity, as each character in turn tries to instruct within their own set of rules as to the riddle solution.

The question arises as to whether, when talking of the larger form of narrative, the term "riddle" is adequate in order to explore the complexity of the techniques that are being used to elicit the satisfaction in the reading experience. A riddle suggests a single problem that has to be solved through such techniques as the pun. In terms of the larger narrative it is my contention that the term "joke" is more appropriate. Whilst jokes are not directly synonymous with riddles in that they have the element of humour that the riddle need not have, there are close parallels between the two forms. For the purpose of this analysis, by the term "joke" what is meant is the concept as discussed by Sigmund Freud in his work

Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious.[183] For Freud what the term "joke" means is open to debate; he does reference Fischer as stating that the purpose of jokes as being to "bring forward something that is concealed or hidden,"[184] which offers insight, as well as parallels to the role of the detective. What Freud further states is that this also offers questions that are phrased in the terms already used by Shklovsky:

> We found that the characteristics and effects of jokes are linked with certain forms of expression or technical methods, among which the most striking are condensation, displacement and indirect representation. Processes, however, which lead to the same results– condensation, and indirect representation– have become known to us as peculiarities of the dream-work. Does not this agreement suggest the conclusion that joke-work and dream-work must, at least in some essential respect, be identical?[185]

The greater complexity of the joke narrative and its relations to the dream-work, with its multiple strands of metonymic connection, leads to a more complex model on which to base structural understanding and the response of the reader. At core the distinction is between the pun that rested on a single word level and an array of interlinked plays that build toward a larger and more complex punchline that combines the multiple strands in a

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[183] Sigmund Freud, (1905) Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious, trans. James Strachey (1960)

[184] Freud, pp13-14

[185] Freud, p165

moment of satisfied revelation. The techniques of displacement, condensation and indirect-representation are ones already seen as being central to the construction of the detective text in the analysis of the Holmes stories. When dealing with the larger scope of the novel the reader becomes aware of the multiplicity of how these can be used in order to sustain the array of the narrative.

Wilkie Collins' The Moonstone offers such possibilities. Famously referred to by T. S. Eliot[186] as "the best" English detective novel, The Moonstone is a text that is acutely about the role of jokes and their effect as a means of displacement. Like "The Purloined Letter" and the Holmes stories, the process of guilt begins through the awareness of the signifier within the title. Examples of this are multiple, Conan Doyle's titles were often "The Adventure of the… [Signifier]", an element taken further by Christie with her frequent use of "Murder" in the title to signify the event around which guilt will arise as the signifier rather than an object. The ethical and aesthetic are brought into play by Christie as readers both anticipate the aesthetic nature of said murder, and the complexity of the plot designed around it.

Freud defines displacement as lying "in the diversion of the train of thought, the displacement of the psychical emphasis on to a topic other than the opening one."[187] What is interesting in The Moonstone is that this displacement is literally a narrative about a displacement, as "The Purloined Letter" had been. Like the Poe story, what the reader must be aware of is the fact that "the Moonstone" is no more the central concern of The Moonstone than the letter had been, it is the metaphor that is the signifying catalyst of all of

[186] T. S. Eliot (1932) "Wilkie Collins and Dickens" pp460-70

[187] Freud, p51.

the action, as such, the reader's attention should be drawn to the characters' position in relation to this signifier. Rather than simply thinking of the role of the signifier for the thief and the victim, here the signifier is an influence upon how each narration is conveyed, a motivator for bias as displacement in the narrative.

Collins states in his preface: "The attempt made, here, is to trace the influence of character on circumstances."[188] It is in the varying language that is used by the differing narrators to form the whole narrative that Collins allows us to find the location of the dialogue. As readers we must process the language features that offer the subjectivity in the narrative intention of each speaker and create moments of intertextual conflict. As Lacan stated:

> The dialogues themselves, in the opposite use they make of the powers of speech, take on a tension which makes them a different drama, one which our vocabulary will distinguish from the first as persisting in the symbolic order.[189]

The Moonstone creates the difference in its drama through the tensions that arise through the dialogue of different speech, using differences in register, gender, and tense alongside variance in purpose. Within a novel concerned with repetition the reader is faced with the same events as conveyed by different vocabularies throughout the text, often commenting on the preceding account in a qualifying way. In many instances these repetitions are solely expressed through condensed allusions to events that have been more explicitly conveyed

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[188] Wilkie Collins, (1868) The Moonstone, p3

[189]Jacques Lacan, (1972) "Seminar on "The Purloined Letter", Trans. Jeffrey Mehlman p34

in a different narrative, the choice of the condensation contributing to the dialogic process that readers use to centre the moral conscience.

D. A. Miller argues that the narrative of control and discipline is a product of the multiple narrators, but that this works only as a ruse. The Moonstone is more fundamentally about the securities of perception and language than about the problems they pose. Miller argues that the novel is monological:

> Formally and linguistically, the master-discourse that organises the text is unwritten: carried only through the subjective narratives that are unwittingly but regularly obliged to postulate it. Collins's technique is a way to inscribe the *effects* of monologism in the text without ascribing them to the *agency* of an actual monologist. As a result, monologism doesn't strictly seem *in* the text (like the shifters and first-person pronouns that identify the narrator in George Eliot or Trollope); nor does it seem fully *outside* the text (like an interpretative choice that one may, or may not, impose on it). Rather, it is staged like an "invisible hand," programming the text without needing to be programmed into it.[190]

For Miller the monologism is analogous to the detection and its representation, but I believe that it is in the elusiveness that the greater interest of the narrative interplay is rooted. Miller's key phrase is "invisible hand", that there is a sense of an unwritten third party that is offering a further perspective upon the action that differs from that present in either the direct narration or the reader's wider understanding of the conflicting strands. For Lillian

[190] D. A. Miller, (1988) The Novel and the Police p56

Nayder such an "invisible hand" is seen in what she sees as the novel's continual support of the "British hegemony".[191] However, A. D. Hutter sees within the narrative that "The broader cultural shift which led to changes in narrative fiction reflects the nineteenth-century Englishman's perspective of himself, both politically and psychologically."[192] Such changes emphasise a perspective of change that the differing voices of The Moonstone seek to illustrate the conflict between. The very narrative friction in itself dispels the notion of monologism or hegemony.

With the exception of four notable examples (the letters of Rosanna Spearman and Dr Candy, the report of Sergeant Cuff, and the journal of Ezra Jennings) the reader is displaced from the narrative by the fact that s/he is presented with recollections. These are necessarily represented as condensations of the events, to the extent that Collins on a number of occasions has the narrator state that s/he is deliberately condensing: for example, when Betteredge states "I find that we may pass pretty rapidly over the interval between Mr Franklin Blake's arrival and Miss Rachel's birthday,"[193] the reader is denied access to the blossoming of the central romance; or when Blake's narrative makes the sudden shift: "the scene shifts from the plantation, to Betteredge's little sitting-room"[194] so as not to directly discuss his emotional state in a scene. As with Watson the reader is being called into an experience of complicity through this process of paralipsis. By having multiple narrators

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[191] Lillian Nayder, (2006) "Collins and Empire" p148

[192] A. D. Hutter, (1975) "Dreams, Transformations and Literature: The Implications of Detective Fiction" p180

[193] Wilkie Collins (1868) The Moonstone, p61

[194] Collins, p315

Collins can manipulate this complicity further as he has the potential to offer differing experiences of reliability in terms of the reader's relation to the given narrator of each section of the narrative.

The reader is displaced through indirect representations. Firstly, recollections are displaced from the time that the events happened, doubly so with Betteredge who uses his unreliable memory in tandem with his daughter's diary creating an inherent sense of doubt as to whose recollection is actually being recorded. At each point the reader is given the narration of the character that is furthest removed from the understanding of the issue of guilt. Understanding is important as it does not always correlate that the said narrator lacks guilt, in one case, that of Blake, the narrative reads like a confession of that very state. It is the doubt as to why such a state of guilt should exist, and more so be explored, to the point of outrage in the case of Miss Clack, that each narrative is set to convey. For the reader, faced with these contrasts of expression, the moral conscience dialogically attempts to ascertain the presence of guilt while the text seems designed to obfuscate this.

It is the skill of Collins that each of his narrating characters, with the exception of Ezra Jennings and Rosanna Spearman, is aware that they are narrating for the purpose of meeting the needs of the implied reader, Franklin Blake, who could be seen as Miller's invisible hand. As Betteredge states at the beginning of his narrative:

> "We have certain events to relate," Mr Franklin proceeded; "and we have certain persons concerned in those events who are capable of relating them. Starting from

> these plain facts, the idea is that we should all write the story of the Moonstone in turn– as far as our own personal experience extends, and no farther."[195]

Collins illustrates in this voiced intention the problems that are inherent in this form of record. Firstly, when will "facts" ever be "plain" when they are presented from "personal experience"? Further, to what degree can the reader ever be sure, when the text is presented as reminiscence that the recollection is only ever based on the expression of that experience? For Miller to state that this leads to monologism seems in turn to be problematic as such definite conclusions seem to be inherently called into question.

In exploring such narrative positioning James Phelan states that in such textual forms the process of narration has to be seen in itself as an event to be explored:

> More formally, the rhetorical theorist defines narrative as somebody telling somebody else on some occasion and for some purpose(s) that something happened. This conception has several significant consequences for the kinds of knowledge about narrative the approach seeks. It gives special attention to the relations among tellers, audiences, and the something that has happened.[196]

That the narrative of The Moonstone informs the reader that the purpose of the text's existence is because "The memories of innocent people may suffer, hereafter, for want of a

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[195] Collins, pp21-22

[196] James Phelan, (2007) "Rhetoric/Ethics" p203.

record of the facts to which those who come after us can appeal"[197] providing an implied ethical dimension that influences the purpose of the telling. This phrase is open to interpretation as it does not state which people are the supposedly "innocent" who may suffer. The reader must then assume that the narrative presented will attempt to influence cognition in relation to the narrator's own perspective on this term. The questionability of the nature of innocence creates an ethical discussion within the textual construction of the narrative. As Phelan states, there is "an ethics of the told and an ethics of the telling[198]," creating a multi-layered event which brings the relationships between the tellers into the direct focus of the reader.

The decisions each narrator makes in terms of narrative detail and character description are designed to present the correct ethical and aesthetic perspective. Much of the ambiguity of the narrative, the complexity that appeals to the reader's moral conscience as a process of discovery, is created through the necessary conflict and compromise that the characters enact in order to reflect both their opinion and their intended appeal to Blake's implied sensibilities. The presence of the implied reader is one that is frequently used in detective fiction as it projects an array of references that allows the reader to feel immersion in the society of the text. The reader is in dialogue with this implied reader as it has to be ascertained if said reader is one that is reflective of the reader's own sensibilities.

As Phelan illustrates with Poe's text "The Cask of Amontillado," the narrator relays a case of committing murder to the reader as a friend who would share an appreciation of their ingenuity. It is the dialogic dimension of the reader's revulsion that creates the

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[197] Wilkie Collins, The Moonstone, (1868), p21

[198] James Phelan, (2007) "Rhetoric/Ethics" p203.

understanding of guilt that this story necessitates. That Blake is a rather ambiguous character for much of the narrative of The Moonstone means that the dialogic dimension of reading is more complex than simply assuming that the narrative is being directed in a way that the reader should perceive as morally correct. The ambiguity of the character's true role creates the necessary destabilisation for the reader to enter into dialogue with the world of the text. That the ethical focus of the narrative directed to Blake may not be what it seems is indicated through Betteredge stating "I was informed of what my personal concern was with the matter of Diamond."[199] The reader wishes to believe that the period of time that Betteredge is meant to cover was conveyed to him but cannot wholly shake off the feeling that Betteredge has been told what to say.

Collins imbues each of his narrators with their own specific tropes and quirks of phrasing and focus. Ginzburg's attention to the marginal aspects of the narrator's style would allow the reader to elicit significant elements when comparing dialogically the perspectives that are presented by each of the narrators. These marginal stylistic elements are further influenced by the degree to which they are considered acceptable by Blake as the implied reader. Chapter six of the narrative of Miss Clack is exclusively an argument via letters between the narrator and Blake over his insistence that she does not include "irrelevant" religious material. This chapter is deliberately trying to inhibit a different religious perspective from entering the text and Clack's religious extremity is dealt with comically. Collins, through Blake, is not interested in a direct and full expression of such external ethical values, much in the same way that the Brahmin's belief is only expressed

[199] Wilkie Collins, (1868) The Moonstone, p22

through the "British" perspective of Mr Murthwaite. The ethics of the text must be self-defining through the interrelation of the society presented.

As the implied reader, Blake also takes on the dimension of a signifier within the narrative as readers are aware that he will be central to it. In order to construct a narrative of the length and complexity of The Moonstone it is significant that Collins creates multiple signifiers that are in conflict with each other in terms of the ethical and aesthetic symbolism in the text. These two signifiers, Blake and "the Moonstone", physically meet only briefly, yet it is this period that has the greatest signification for the plot as a whole and the removal of unconditional love from this world. What the transformation to signifier also conveys for Blake is the fact that his interaction with "the Moonstone" casts him as an outsider of the society presented, and in this role he assumes the symbolic position of the detective who must seek to negate his own symbolism by returning to his societal role.

Central to the perception of Blake's role is the displacement created by the sub-title: "A Romance". The reader is displaced in the understanding of what the crime committed actually is through being aware from this sub-title that what appears to be solely pecuniary must also contribute on a different level. One way in which Poe altered the nature of the detective text from that of Vidocq was through the greater acceptance of the romantic sensibility, not least the tropes of the quest narrative. As Dickens stated, the text "is a very curious story, wild yet domestic,"[200] it is the domesticity that centres the romantic, and the story relies upon this for success. In common with the implied reader, Franklin Blake, the reader is on a quest for balance in the relationship between Blake and Rachel. Collins is placing this relationship central to the narrative as he is aware that in order to extend from

[200] Jenny Bourne Taylor, (1988) In The Secret Theatre of Home p176

the simple riddle structure of the short story the reader needs to have a greater emotional connection to the characters presented in the larger construct. Readers, like the characters within, are displaced from the "Romance" of the text and, as Auden suggested, what is desired in the conclusion of the text is a return to the state of unconditional love.

It is easy to look upon The Moonstone as a text about discovering the guilty party in the theft of a diamond; in fact it is a text about the discovery of the guilt of the perpetrator and victim of a joke. For Freud the important distinction between the types of joke is as follows:

> It is easy to divine the characteristic of jokes on which the difference in their hearers' reaction to them depends. In the one case the joke is an end in itself and serves no particular aim, in the other case it does serve such an aim– it becomes *tendentious*. Only jokes that have a purpose run the risk of meeting with people who do not want to listen to them.[201]

There are two issues here, the role of the hearer and the issue of purpose that are both linked to the role that they play in the narrative of the text. In The Moonstone the prologue is tendentious because it has the purpose of inciting within its hearer/ reader a reason for a family feud that also intends ethically to direct the hearer/ reader in their opinion about the person of whom criticism is being voiced. The purpose of the prologue of The Moonstone is stated: "My object is to explain the motive which has induced me to refuse the right hand

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[201] Sigmund Freud, (1905) Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious, trans. James Strachey (1960), p90

of friendship to my cousin, John Herncastle."[202] What follows is a description of Herncastle's actions that are framed in the belief that he is guilty. The narrative has adopted the purpose of making the reader complicit with the opinions that are being voiced, internalising that tendentious attitude. This allows the reader to become immersed in the text as the tendentious nature is a reminder of the "primal scene" and offers a location for the guilt that the moral conscience must respond to.

The narrative of Betteredge is comparable with what Freud describes as innocent in terms of joking:

> Innocent and trivial jokes are likely to put the problem of jokes before us in its purest form, since with them we avoid the danger of being confused by their purpose or having our judgement misled by their good sense.[203]

Betteredge becomes innocent in his narrative because the tendentious drive, the need to attribute guilt, is placed upon a third party, a party seen as the detective. This places Betteredge in the position of the third person, like Doyle's Watson or Poe's narrator. The narrative conveyed to the reader is innocent as there is no confusion in his direct purpose as it suggests the solely expositional. For Freud: "Innocent jokes, too, jokes that serve to reinforce a thought, require another person to test whether they have attained their aim."[204] Betteredge is ethically clear as to the purpose of the narrative that he is telling us. The

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[202] Wilkie Collins, (1868) The Moonstone , p11.

[203] Sigmund Freud, (1905) Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious, p94

[204] Freud, p144.

variance of the tendentious joke comes with the arrival of the villain, whose tendentious statements the reader chooses not to hear, and Cuff or Blake whose tendentious suggestions the reader sympathises with because Betteredge casts them in the role of the detective.

The prologue has no third party detective figure. What should be seen as part of the joke construction of the text is taken directly and becomes a factor of displacement:

> Generally speaking, a tendentious joke calls for three people: in addition to the one who makes the joke, there must be a second who is taken as the object of the hostile or sexual aggressiveness, and a third in whom the joke's aim of producing pleasure is fulfilled.[205]

If the prologue's narrator is the one making the joke and John Herncastle the figure at whom the aggression is directed, then that leaves the reader as the person for whom pleasure is hoping to be fulfilled. The tendentious joke raises the issue of the third person in terms of narrative positioning. As Freud states:

> If a joke enters the service of the purpose of exposing or of a hostile purpose, it may be described as a psychical process between three persons, who are the same as in the case of the comic, though the part played by the third person is different; the psychical process in jokes is accomplished between the first person (the self) and the

[205] Freud, p100

> third (the outside person) and not, as in the case of the comic, between the self and the person who is the object.[206]

The reader is aware that s/he is in an ethical position within this form of joke. The reader appreciates the construction of the joke as an illustration of its form but is capable of being placed outside of its confines through moral distance. This draws attention to the role of the person who is the object as the reader has the choice to be a spectator until the more defined sense of the detective function is made apparent within the textual construction through the definition of that person's object role.

Between the prologue and the beginning of Betteredge's narrative the reader is presented with another frontispiece, that what follows is "The Story". This external instruction offers the first awareness for the reader that there will be disruption within the narrative form that will challenge their cognitive capacity. The definition of the prologue's role is important as it informs that a parallel narrative is at work. It is the distinction of the prologue and the story that leads the reader to be aware that s/he is being told both an innocent and a tendentious joke simultaneously. The division of prologue and story is a case of displacement, a cascading, through a second signifier which diverts the reader's train of thought: if this is the "story", what then was the relevance of the tendentious Prologue? But that question is the relevance in itself; the purpose of the signifier of the separation of the "story" is to remind the reader that the "prologue" is both supplementary and above the text that is going to be read. The tendentious narrative leaves the reader in no doubt that Herncastle was in the wrong in his procuring of the diamond and that there are

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[206] Freud, p144.

those at large who intend to retrieve it for India through any means possible. When the reader is presented with Betteredge's narrative s/he is reading with an assumed complicity with this position even though the reader has been given no real reason to assume complicity with the prologue's narrator, or any awareness that Betteredge himself has ever been aware of this earlier text's existence. The instructive divide prologue/story locates the guilt as something that is above each of the following narratives equally. The moral conscience recognises its unique presence within the text and allows the reader to constantly view the remainder of the narrative with an equal dialogic context in relation to this locale of guilt.

This has particular connotations with regard to how we perceive the implied reader Franklin Blake. We are made aware that the prologue is "extracted" from a family paper, it is not the complete document and has been in some way shaped as a means of presenting this purpose above the text that Blake has commissioned. On the one side it could be viewed that the purpose of placing the prologue here was in order to offer the wider context of the diamond, but this comes soon enough in Betteredge's narrative with the description of the past event of Herncastle appearing at his niece's birthday. Rather, what is important is that readers are informed that it is Blake himself who has done the extracting and it is he who establishes the dialogue of guilt that runs through the narrative, protecting Betteredge whose good nature would not be appropriate for such a narrative function. Though absolved there is a sense that in his role as implied reader Blake is still aware of the need to lay bare his own guilt through the creation of this text, and the extract makes sure that this guilt is at the centre from the start. It establishes a concept that guilt is hereditary and the narrative exists as a form of warning of such to future generations like the baby that Rachel is carrying at the novel's conclusion, the future-implied reader.

The prologue becomes part of the "story" through the fact that regardless how supplementary a role it may have in the layout of the text it is unified in the reader. Absence is made present through the constant need to repeat content with each reference to the diamond. It takes on the role of the third person in the tendentious joke in order to allow Betteredge's innocence to be established. Because the reader accepts the innocence of the joke construction of Betteredge, s/he is led to adopt his perspective concerning the objects of his narrative. Like the dream-work discussed by Žižek the position of the third person here is that of the "place holder of the lack", the necessitous link between the two aspects of the joke being told.

In the opening chapters of the "story" Collins creates a situation where the reader is aware of a dialogue that is outside of the comprehension of the characters except for Blake. The following event is recorded: "Going round to the terrace, I found three mahogany-coloured Indians, in white linen frocks and trousers, looking up at the house."[207] Betteredge as a character, rather than a narrator, knows nothing of the Brahmin in pursuit of the Moonstone. The reader's understanding of the Brahmin's role in the prologue allows a different ethical position to be adopted. The reader cannot allow the Brahmin to be seen as guilty but can still see them as the most likely perpetrators of the crime, like the Gypsies in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band". What Collins has achieved through the method of the tendentious prologue is a displacement effect that allows the reader to place their attention on characters that are blameless at the point where it is most necessary. Betteredge the character knows nothing of the imminent reintroduction of the Moonstone to the Verinder household. The reader knows both of these things and cannot help but be

[207] Wilkie Collins, (1868) The Moonstone, p29

influenced by the tendentious voice of the prologue. This continues through the narrative until the Brahmin are cleared by Superintendent Seegrave.

The dialogic crisis that the moral conscience feels is irresolvable in a way that would satisfy the conflicting states of the aesthetic and the ethical. This crisis is further heightened by the role of condensation within the text. The reader is quick to displace the need to expose the Brahmin because of the brevity of events within Betteredge's narrative. The condensation is the parallel of three periods of knowledge existing simultaneously, creating displacements that would not have been apparent in the immediate context. The events of the prologue, which are forty-nine years prior to the events of Betteredge's narrative, directly precede the introduction of the Brahmin in the structure of the novel. Preceding the mention of the Brahmin in Betteredge's narrative is the discussion of Franklin Blake, who is known from Chapter One to be involved in a story about the diamond. Finally, the reader is aware that Betteredge is narrating in light of the conclusion and cannot rule out the presence of an awareness of resolution.

The reader becomes aware that the passage contains indirect representation. Betteredge never describes the Brahmin as being any more than a collection of performers, but it is this role that colours the reader's perception. There should be no reason to suspect the conjurers, there is a significant birthday party pending and they are offering their services. The representation of Brahmin as people who would do anything for the Moonstone, reinforced by Blake, allows the moral conscience at this point to displace knowledge of the legend onto these characters. On the ethical side the reader is aware that if these conjurers are the Brahmin then there is a desire that they will have the Moonstone returned to them by some means. What complicates this is that the reader has spent a significant part of the text up to this point being presented with the growing affection

between Blake and Rachel, the "romance" of the text. The aesthetic side is aware that any situation that would lead to the restoration of the diamond to the Brahmin would be a privation of Rachel and one that could be characterised in terms of the introduction of a further sin to necessitate a new narrative of guilt.

Collins has constructed within the text a sense of the pre-conscious (the prologue), the conscious (the events reconstructed), and the unconscious (the suggestion that Betteredge has greater knowledge as he is narrating from a future point with awareness of the conclusion). It is the connection of these three at key points of the text that allows for the condensation to be particularly affecting in its displacement of the reader's attention. As Freud states "*A preconscious thought is given over for a moment to unconscious revision and the outcome of this is at once grasped by conscious perception.*"[208] The process of the dialogic is at work: the preconscious is the intention, the unconscious is the desire for resolution and the belief of the presence of authority, making the conscious the position of the moral conscience at this given point. The connection of past, present and future in relation to the wish of the fantasy offers a direct parallel to the Freudian model.

The condensation is designed to be such that the reader is unable to reconcile all three of these areas, the solution arrived at is not yet satisfactory as a moment where the reader feels the restoration to an understanding of the feeling of guilt. The only recourse that the text has is to move on to the next point of conflict that allows for a dialogic response:

> The dispute between them began in Mr Franklin being led– I forget how– to acknowledge that he had latterly slept very badly at night. Mr Candy thereupon told

[208] Sigmund Freud, (1905) Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious, p166

> him that his nerves were all out of order, and that he ought to go through a course of medicine immediately. Mr Franklin replied that a course of medicine, and a course of groping in the dark, meant, in his estimation, one and the same thing. Mr Candy, hitting back smartly, said that Mr Franklin himself was, constitutionally speaking, groping in the dark after sleep, and that nothing but medicine could help him find it. Mr Franklin, keeping the ball up on his side, said he had often heard of the blind leading the blind, and now, for the first time, he knew what it meant. In this way, they kept it going briskly, cut and thrust, till they both of them got hot– Mr Candy, in particular, so completely losing his self-control, in defence of his profession, that my lady was obliged to interfere, and forbid the dispute to go on.[209]

This is the most important narrative passage in the whole of the text and it is a masterpiece of condensation. In this passage the reader is told of Franklin Blake "groping in the dark", of "medicine" offering the solution, of this "blind leading the blind", of a "lady" having to intervene, and of Mr Candy going beyond his professional decorum. It is a secondary "primal scene" that is the novel as a whole in microcosm. Like the title of Poe's "The Purloined Letter", what is presented here is destined to repeat: Blake does "grope in the dark" when taking the Moonstone; "medicine" in the form of opium offers the eventual solution; "the blind lead the blind" because the important piece of information, the joke of Mr Candy, is not disclosed, so they are blind to a line of investigation; Rosanna and Rachel intervene to protect Blake; and Mr Candy's action following this argument is the true central crime of the novel, he plays the joke on Blake by administering opium without his

[209] Wilkie Collins (1868) The Moonstone, p81

knowledge. The reader is not given direct speech in this passage, it is indirect representation; the reader is displaced in the significance as it is seen as an occurrence that Betteredge is trying to race through. Why would he be dismissing this? Because what follows after seems at the point of reading to be more significant: the return of the Brahmin.

The narrative situates and replaces the dialogic dimension of the eventual theft by presenting a "primal scene" here. The text has lain bare what is significant but the condensation displaces the reader from the perceived point of indirect representation of Mr Candy to the narrative indirect representation of the Brahmin. The moral conscience is not informed enough to allow for the understanding that this passage could so readily give. This passage is centrally important in creating suspicion within the reader of a conviction concerning the ultimate innocence of Franklin Blake, as each trope of this condensed text comes to correspond with the motifs that reveal that innocence. As with the Holmes stories there is a sense of bathos in the fact that something that has here been laid bare takes so long to be revealed in a more concrete sense. The joke at the heart of the text is being displaced by another joke.

Once the diamond is stolen, the reader's suspicions fall upon the Brahmin. Superintendent Seegrave dismisses this suggestion by revealing that they had been imprisoned. This offers a moment of jouissance in the reader as there is recognition that suspicion of the Brahmin had not only been misplaced but had also had a distasteful dimension as a result of the prologue. The confirmation that the moral conscience was correct in not finding coinherence in the Brahmin as the criminals is an affirmative sensation that allows the reader to move forward. It is notable that this affirmation of the moral conscience comes from a figure that is symbolic of the law; the ethical certainty of his authority confirms the validity of the statement. This jouissance is only momentary as

the reader is equally aware of the fact that the theft of the diamond has derailed the aesthetic storyline of Blake and Rachel's romance.

The reader is presented with another example of the effect of condensation through Rosanna Spearman, a crippled girl from the reformatory seen firstly at the "shivering sands". The "shivering sands" offer a signifier in relation to what the reader recognises as Rosanna's narrative. The link between the "shivering sands" and her guilt is reinforced by the repetition of her returning there. It is an addictive need to place her in their presence; the sands evoke a "primal scene" for Rosanna and their role must be linked with her restoration to order. The references to Rosanna increase after the point of the theft as her actions are unusual, giving Betteredge cause to comment. Collins is establishing another process of displacement and the effect is multiple as there is a conflict between the ethical and aesthetic desires in relation to Rosanna's narrative.

The structural purpose of the displacement upon Rosanna is to allow for the obscuration of the most important information at the beginning of Chapter Twelve. Rosanna being out of the house when she should not have been complies with the suggestion that she was working with the Brahmin and is noted as an important piece of information in the confirmation of guilt. Rosanna has actually been out to buy the material needed to make sure that she can disguise having removed Blake's paint-soiled nightshirt, a fact that delays suspicion falling upon him and the story's conclusion.

What follows this appears in comparison an irrelevance:

> Worthy Mr Candy had said one more of his many unlucky things, when he drove off in the rain on the birthday night, and told me that a doctor's skin was waterproof. In spite of his skin, the wet had got through him. He had caught a chill that night, and

> was now down with a fever. The last accounts, brought by the postman, represented him to be light-headed– talking nonsense as glibly, poor man, in his delirium as he often talked it in his sober senses.[210]

This account of the health of Mr Candy is given in more detail in the text than the information concerning Rosanna. Because it comes immediately after the more obvious location of guilt the reader dismisses it as the homely ramblings of Betteredge's innocent narrative. In truth it is as important an event, perhaps more so, in terms of leading to the delay of the discovery of the true events as the fever leaves Mr Candy without the capacity to recall the joke. Skilfully Collins presents a true lure, as though the reader were at the dinner party scene. Such is the narrative diversion toward the false lures of Rosanna and the Brahmin, who have taken on the significations of the aesthetic and the ethical respectively, that the reader disregards as insignificant this most essential piece of information. In Ginzburg's definition of the marginal detail, this is significantly marginal and it would take a true intellect to identify it.[211]

The displacement of guilt from the Brahmin to Rosanna is only one of her functions of displacement. Rosanna symbolises Collins' displacement of suspicion from men to

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[210] Collins, p105.

[211] At no point is this ever identified as a lure. The restoration of Mr Candy to the narrative is through the recognition of the significance of a symptom of his illness, not the role of the illness itself. The ethical process of curing the man for his own sake allows the aesthetic resolution to come through. The innocent narrative between Jennings and Candy is allowed to fulfil its true tendentious purpose when Blake is brought in as a third party to it.

women, and the parallel actions of two women. It is a frequent feature of the displacement through indirect representation that the reader is informed by Betteredge, and then later narrators, about the inferiority of women, but this is also a joke of the text. Given that he is not party to the joke and the vital information needed to solve the case, Sergeant Cuff's investigation follows a logical path and hits squarely on the truth of the society that is presented. There is no surprise, in the context, that he picks the wrong gender.

For Betteredge the gender bias is the one tendentious feature of his narrative voice, but it is one that Collins undercuts through the frequent references in his early chapters of the considerable aid and sensible advice that is offered to him by his daughter. This establishes the theme of men taking control when they are in many ways oblivious to their own role in the action. Certainly, Rosanna and Rachel act in a guilty manner that attracts attention, but this is because in both cases they are nearer to the solution of the crime than Sergeant Cuff and are acting out of love to protect Franklin Blake. It is this awareness of the presence of love in the female characters that offers a point of suspicion on the part of the moral conscience: examples such as Clack's narrative constantly featuring tropes such as "dear" as a prefix to Ablewhite's name, or her sub-clauses such as "as Mr Godfrey does everything else"[212] offering such positive qualification of the character's actions that distract from his guilt even after the fact. Roseanna's small victory of changing the button holes and central action of changing the nightshirt, coupled with Rachel's silence, particularly emphasised by a character who has not spoken much within the text, demonstrate further physical manifestations. It is a lure that the reader is aware of being true as it appeals to both the ethical and aesthetic desires simultaneously. That the negative

[212] Collins, p211

display of this is shown in language and the positive in action further emphasises that central discussion of the role of language, explanation, as distinct from marginal detail that is central to the text.

The central focus of Sergeant Cuff's investigation is equally concerned with the presence of indirect representation and he acknowledges the fact that the obvious answer is not the most likely. This indicates the parallelism at work in this section of the text: the reader is presented with Rosanna, the previous criminal, acting in a guilty fashion hiding the nightshirt; also presented is Rachel, the person beyond reproach, acting out of character, in the opinion of the narrators. The reader is given little evidence of Rachel before the crime to truly ascertain her character, and is never presented with her directly. Cuff indicates the guilt in Rachel, believing her to have a secret life for which she needs money, but no evidence is given as to why he should reach such a conclusion except out of prejudice. Such an ungrounded suspicion by a member of the law, particularly against a character that we are predisposed to like as part of the romance, creates a further conflict in the moral conscience.

The other important role of this parallelism is that it establishes the threat to the central character. In the indirect investigation that focuses upon the female characters Rosanna is brought to such a state of fear of suspicion that she commits suicide. The letter in Chapter Five of Franklin Blake's narrative demonstrates to the reader that this death is every bit as much a focus of the crime as the theft of the Moonstone. At this point, as the fate of the Moonstone is not known outside of Blake's own sense of culpability, the guilt for her death is the dominant emotion. This feeling is made all the stronger by the fact that the letter is the first piece of direct narrative in the text and as such the furthest removed from the notion of the joke. It is realised that the greatest displacement that has occurred

through the theft of the diamond is within the status of the central lovers when Rosanna writes:

> Behind your back, I loved you with all my heart and soul. Before your face– there's no denying it– I was frightened of you; frightened of making you angry with me; frightened of what you might say to me (though you *had* taken the Diamond) if I presumed to tell you that I had found it out.[213]

These words could just as easily be those that Franklin Blake needs to address to Rachel and the reader fears that he may also follow the drastic path of Rosanna. The direct representation of emotion makes readers realise the need for love to become central to the narrative. The desire for a state of unconditional love that the resolution presupposes is writ large within the text and the reader dialogically recognises this as the aesthetic and ethically desired central focus. Rosanna's letter, by being contemporaneous to the action becomes in itself a signifier. It is a representation of a "primal scene" that centres the true nature of the guilt of the text.

The reader is now desirous to absolve guilt in the immersion of this society, because this society has resulted in the death of an innocent, a true privation. The theft of the diamond from Rachel did not meet this requirement as it was the theft of something that had caused privation elsewhere. Rosanna's death is the first true crime of the "story". What is more, this society has killed the symbol of the unconditional love that the reader, and many religious faiths, not least the two included in the text, aspire to.

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[213] Collins, p330

At the point of Rosanna's death and suspicion being laid upon Rachel Collins presents the reader with his greatest point of parallelism. The narrative of Miss Clack seems to be the most radical moment of displacement as it features neither Blake nor active discussion concerning the Moonstone, yet, for Blake the implied reader, there is a sense that this is the narrative of greatest importance. Blake the editor further destabilises our position as primary reader by making interjections to Miss Clack's narrative in his appeals for clarity. The reader is informed that Miss Clack is a cousin of Rachel's, and in a position to witness her progress in London. In all other regards, if her function is considered to be about searching for innocence, she is a strange choice to present the narrative at this point. This would be misunderstanding Collins' purpose: Miss Clack is the confirmation of the joke technique as her narrative is the most displaced, condensed and indirect in its representations. It is also overtly tendentious.

It is significant that here is a character who is defined so much in terms of her helplessness. Not only is she financially helpless and dependent on her family, but she is also ethically helpless, and through being caught in the grasp of the opinions of the pamphlets and societies that she is forever raising, aesthetically helpless. This trope of helplessness colours the focus of the narrative that she conveys at all times and makes it difficult for the reader to find their own ethical or aesthetic desires in her narrative position, because the position of the helpless narrator makes us doubt the reliability.

Unlike Betteredge, who has been seen to have the trust of Blake, or Blake's own narrative, whose helplessness is used with regard for the exploration of the personal ethical narrative of this central character, Clack's helplessness, which comes between these two, is repellent to the reader. This creates a crisis within the reading experience that reflects the sense of the irresolvable that is present in the society of the narrative at this point. That

Collins uses Clack to further represent two contentious areas of Victorian society, the strict religious paternalism and the role of women as subservient, whilst simultaneously parodying the cliché of the reader of sensation fiction in her sexual voyeurism of Ablewhite and Rachel, serves to create a suspicion of these attitudes. For readers there is the constant suspicion that in Clack's narrative the position of guilt is always contrary to where desire would hope for it to be located for narrative resolution.

Miss Clack's indirect narrative is centrally concerned with the detail of two characters: Rachel and Ablewhite. At this point of the narrative the guilt rests on Rachel and has not been anywhere near Ablewhite. It is this that Clack continues to reflect even though at the conclusion of the novel the reader is aware that these situations are reversed. The tendentious prejudice of Miss Clack does not innocently offer facts as Betteredge had; instead she deliberately misleads readers into the complicit belief of the opposite of the truth. She is the extreme example of the false lure, a character who is being presented as a reliable narrator but who is in all manners completely unreliable. If the reader has felt that the nearest that the aesthetic and ethical desires have come to coinhering in Betteredge's narrative was in the belief that the romance between Blake and Rachel would be a satisfactory conclusion, awareness should now be that the reader is placed at the furthest distance from a notion of love. Such is the construction through other false lures, and not least Clack's distaste at the idea of seeing Rachel as a rival to her for the affections of Ablewhite, that this awareness is not forthcoming.

Collins further exaggerates the statements made about the duplicitous nature of women, but what the reader realises is that Collins is utilising a specific form of tendentious joke defined by Freud: "We know what is meant by "smut": the intentional

bringing into prominence of sexual facts and relations by speech."[214] It is the purpose of Miss Clack's narrative to try to confirm the suspicions of the hidden and scandalous double life of Rachel first suggested by Sergeant Cuff. Her indirect representation of Rachel is full of statements such as the following:

> I never see Rachel myself without wondering how it can be that so insignificant-looking a person should be the child of such distinguished parents as Sir John and Lady Verinder. On this occasion, however, she not only disappointed– she really shocked me. There was an absence of all ladylike restraint in her language and manner most painful to see. She was possessed by some feverish excitement which made her distressingly loud when she laughed, and sinfully wasteful and capricious in what she ate and drank at lunch.[215]

In the context of the type of religious extremism that is presented in Miss Clack's character these attacks on Rachel's lack of restraint, to the point of being shocking, are unquestionably linked to a perception of an unrestrained sexuality. A different form of guilt is evoked within our moral conscience for the purpose of distracting us from our true desirous path to resolution. Collins is challenging his readers in their prejudices, as he did with the Brahmin. As with that situation it is the reader's role as the third person, "the place holder of the lack", that is important as it is through this that Collins makes the reader pay particular attention to detail. If the reader rejects Miss Clack's attitude it means s/he also

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[214] Sigmund Freud, (1905) Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious, p100

[215] Wilkie Collins (1868) The Moonstone, p81

rejects the information that has been given so far. As Rachel's vivacity is presented in relation to her interactions with Ablewhite the reader is complicit in the smut because s/he wants Rachel to resume her relationship with Blake. The smut serves the same purpose but the reader is drawn to the opposite party in jealous guilt. Through this use of the tendentious smut what Collins outlays with Miss Clack is the understanding of where the reader needs to turn their attention in order to find the solution. It sets the course to the direct emotion, the understanding of true unconditional love, which comes later in the letter of Rosanna.

Miss Clack's narrative is an indirect representation of the events and particularly of Rachel, but it is also a direct representation of the emotions of Miss Clack. What the reader realises is that Miss Clack is part of the parallel structure with Rachel and Rosanna, but where they were both protecting Blake Miss Clack is protecting the memory of "[her] precious and admirable friend" Godfrey Ablewhite. It is this that leads to the smut. Freud states about these types of joke:

> The power which makes it difficult or impossible for women, and to a lesser degree for men as well, to enjoy undisguised obscenity is termed by us "repression"; and we recognise in it the same psychical process which, in cases of serious illness, keeps whole complexes of impulses, together with their derivatives, away from consciousness, and which has turned out to be the main factor in the causation of what are known as psychoneuroses… The repressive activity of civilisation brings it about that primary possibilities of enjoyment, which have now, however, been repudiated in the censorship in us, are lost to us. But to the human psyche all

> renunciation is exceedingly difficult, and we find that tendentious jokes provide a means of undoing the renunciation and retrieving what was lost.[216]

The reader sees that the letter of Rosanna Spearman is a narrative of repressed feeling, the narrative of Miss Clack is similarly a narrative of a repressed emotion. This seeks to reclaim that which is lost through tendentious smut directed at her nearest rival. If the letter of Rosanna is a signifier of the "primal scene," then this narrative of Miss Clack is the signifier of the ultimate false lure, it is an immersion into a society where the value system is, in all instances, contrary to that which the moral conscience should recognise as correct.

The main purpose of Miss Clack's narrative is to report the proposal of Ablewhite to Rachel, an act that she characterises in extremely sexual terms witnessed from behind a curtain, a position of disguise that reflects her own emotions. By being a secret observer, she deprives the reader of the position of "the place holder of the lack" and appropriates it for herself. The voyeuristic eroticism of Clack casts her into the role of the daydreamer within the text, but it is a further characteristic of her helplessness that she not only fails to accept the eroticism of the wish fantasy that she enacts in her voyeurism, but also actively rejects the idea that she could accept such feelings through her religious austerity. When Clack almost gives in to her desire for Ablewhite but is ignored, the reader sees this frustrated desire in pitiable terms and takes this example of frustration created by an overly repressed society as a warning to the potential damage to the central romance.

Miss Clack's narrative is the most overtly comic because it is the most factually wrong. This is of particular interest when we reflect back on the arguments concerning

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[216] Sigmund Freud, (1905) Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious, p101

narrative position presented by Phelan. By creating a narrative characterised by the trope of smut what Collins is illustrating for the reader at this early stage of the narrative is that the teller's desire to influence the cognitive response of the reader could be driven by complex emotional states. The factual inaccuracies of Clack's narrative are not necessarily ones that Clack is aware of. The most important inaccuracy, failing to mention that Ablewhite is guilty, is more of an omission than a lie. The emotional truth is that Clack's narrative is clouded by an extreme sense of desire for Ablewhite, one her religion and financial status would not let her express, and circumstances have denied her. In her narrative there is the feeling that here, by placing herself back in the events as she perceived them, she can restore herself, and all future readers, into a position where she is seen as having those desires met. The reason that the reader persists with such a tendentious narrative is because s/he recognises the aestheticism of it as a daydream rather than a true account. The fantasy that Clack presents is what she wants to believe as a result of her erotic desire for the memory of Ablewhite, the pitiable helplessness only serves to emphasise the frustration of such a fantasy.

The problem of this narrative is that Clack takes on too much of the ethical dimension of authority in instruction, as such the aesthetic sensibility is suffocated. Miss Clack's narrative is a true illustration of that proposed by Ginzburg and Žižek as the position of the detective, and it is unsatisfactory for this reason. Her role as the one in command of the truth through her religious bias is reflective of their detective figure in the know, and can direct all understanding of the given situation without any recourse to allow the reader to interact. It is this reversed balance that allows Collins to keep the reader displaced and at the furthest point from the joke's solution whilst allowing the theme of repression to be an ever present factor in the second period narrative. What has been missing in this narrative is

any sense of the detective function of the moral conscience. Miss Clack is singularly disinterested is solving the mystery as this would mean including that which she chooses to omit. Whilst she still takes the position of the law she is more interested in preserving the repression.

After the brief innocent narrative of Matthew Bruff, readers are exposed directly to the character who the text has been literally repressing: Franklin Blake. Blake's narrative, which is divided by Ezra Jennings' journal, is all about the nature of repression, but in contrast to Miss Clack, about how that repression can be addressed. It is the role that the reader plays as third person that is important to the understanding of the structural relevance of each of the revelations upon the psyche of the narrator that is presented. There is a return to the "detective-fever" and the role of the detective as riddle solver. The reader is returned to the position of the "place holder of the lack" and it is significant that this is in complicity with the implied reader narrating to himself, treading the fine line between soliloquy and solipsism. Initially this restoration is performed in the revelations concerning Rosanna Spearman. Rather than bringing about the solution, these lead Blake to confront Rachel on what she is holding back: "*You villain, I saw you take the Diamond with my own eyes!*"[217] What is important in both Rosanna's revelation of the nightdress and this exclamation of Rachel's is that they act as the points of displacement that present the mystery story with what it had been lacking. It restores to the text the necessary signifier of a "primal scene", the secondary theft that is a repetition of that first one placed in the prologue. This marks the first stage of the transition from the narrative of Rosanna and

[217] Wilkie Collins (1868) The Moonstone, p347

Rachel, both of whom have been proven guiltless, to the parallel narrative of Blake and Ablewhite, except at this point there is no reason to connect Ablewhite to any of the events.

The moral conscience understands that this new signifier has redefined the dialogic of the guilt in the world of the text. The problem is that the reader is still in the realm of a displaced, condensed narrative that features indirect representation. What Collins is holding back is both the central signifier of the riddle, Mr Candy's joke, and the means of solution to the joke, which in effect are one and the same thing. The reader needs a different detective, one who is privileged with skills that the other characters do not have. As Ronald R. Thomas states: "*The Moonstone*'s significance is due to the methodical way in which it reconstructs the past through deploying techniques of the emerging nineteenth-century science of forensic criminology and the practices of criminal investigation it inspired."[218] This is centred in the character of Jennings, the identifier of marginal details described in the Ginzburg model.

Ezra Jennings is the epitome of the supplementary detective, the person who can bring forth that which is hidden by solving the riddle. What Jennings is capable of doing is to take the world and look at it in the terms of Shklovsky:

> The purpose of the image is not to draw our understanding closer to that which the image stands for, but rather to allow us to perceive the object in a special way, in short, to lead us to a "vision" of this object rather than mere "recognition".[219]

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[218] Ronald R. Thomas (1999) Detective Fiction and the Rise of Forensic Science. p66

[219] Viktor Shklovsky, (1925) Theory of Prose, p10

It is this relevance of "vision" that is important to the process that Jennings brings to the narrative. What Jennings emphasises is the need to "lay bare" the truth of the story, to repeat in order to break down the displacement, the condensation and the indirect representation that has led to the confusion that is in the narrative at this point of time. The important act of defamiliarisation, the vision, that Ezra Jennings introduces, is the reinterpretation of the events of the text from those of a joke that everyone is complicit with to those of a dream which he can use to analyse the true events. As Jenny Bourne Taylor states: "Jennings operates as Blake's 'unconscious', the site of the painful and intractable memories of which Blake is blissfully ignorant, as well as being the possessor of scientific knowledge of how the unconscious works."[220] His "vision" is imbued with the greater knowledge that Ginzburg identified as a feature of the detective, and it is Jennings' knowledge of the unconscious that unlocks not only the truth of the events of the evening through Blake but also the existence of the joke.

The parallel between Jennings' "vision" and Freud and Auden's "fantasy" stresses the importance of the position that he takes and draws the contrast that his role offers to those that preceded it. Jennings is not concerned with his own personal fantasy as the other characters had been; rather his most prominent characteristic is his selflessness of concern. Focusing upon the marginal detail Jennings transforms the interpretation of Candy's dream into the recreation of the act itself, first figuratively then in actuality. Collins has provided Jennings with two important skills. Firstly, Jennings has developed an interest in a means of interpretation of utterances in sleep that has led him to interpret from Mr Candy the presence of the joke, transforming the condensed: "Wants sleep… Lady Verinder's

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[220] Jenny Bourne Taylor, (1988) In the Secret Theatre of Home, p190

medicine chest… five-and-twenty minims… without his knowing it"[221] into: "He really wants sleep; and Lady Verinder's medicine chest is at my disposal. Give him five-and-twenty minims of laudanum to-night, without his knowing it."[222] Being aware of the estrangement of meaning that can arise, and has arisen, through the condensation of narrative, by restoring it to the full the reader finds that the indirect representation becomes a direct representation. Through this process the defamiliarisation is removed and clarity of meaning is restored. The central joke of the novel, the central signifier, is solved by our riddle solver. As A. D. Hutter states: "Detective fiction is the peculiarly modern distillation of a general literary experience that makes central the subtle interaction with, and interpretation of, language."[223] This is seen through the effect of the multiple narrations, it is Jennings' role to refocus that interpretation of language into one that can be seen to hold truth.

In the tendentious form of joke there was the teller, the audience and the object. As the one on whom the aggression had been placed within the joke, up to this point the object has been Blake, with Candy the teller and enactor of the joke in this instance. To the reader's knowledge there was no audience, as the joke was not fulfilled and Candy could not deliver his punchline the following morning. Yet, in the process that he has enacted by restoring Candy's speech, Jennings has taken that third-party position of the audience of Mr Candy. Collins separates the way the joke is performed so that it becomes two innocent

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[221] Wilkie Collins (1868) The Moonstone, pp386-7

[222] Collins, p387

[223] A. D. Hutter, (1975) "Dreams, Transformations and Literature: The Implications of Detective Fiction" p178

jokes rather than one tendentious joke. The first of these is the reconstruction, the reader stands in the position of the third party with the greater information, the jouissance of the solution offering relief through understanding, with Jennings as teller and Blake as audience. This is repeated in the second instance where Blake is teller to Rachel's audience; Blake also takes the third person position with a means of eliciting sympathy.

This first skill is comparable to free association; the second is a form of dream analysis. The reader sees the comparison between the detective and the analyst being presented through the interpretation of marginal detail. It is this role as a psychoanalyst, albeit before psychoanalysis existed, that makes Jennings unique within the text, but it is not the only thing. Jennings is described as being unique in his physical appearance but the following statements also mark him out: "I was born, and partly brought up, in one of our colonies. My father was an Englishman; but my mother–"[224]; "Physiology says, and says truly, that some men are born with female constitutions– and I am one of them!"[225] When the reader adds that he has experience of opium and has had a lost love affair s/he begins to realise that what Jennings offers the narrative is a figure that has a personal experience comparable to all of those who are accused within the novel. Jennings is the meeting point of all these elements and offers the opportunity to reinterpret what has been displaced by transforming the attention of the narrative from what happened to why it happened. Jennings is illustrative of a point of commonality that acts as a model that the moral conscience has to react to positively, as he symbolises the state to which the reader aspires.

[224] Wilkie Collins (1868) The Moonstone, p371

[225] Collins, p373

Jennings serves his greatest purpose through the use of dream analysis. This returns to the role of repression within the text, the ethical dimension of the law in the dialogic process. The important aspect of the dream analysis is that it is framed in a narrative that is not a reconstruction; it suffers little from the criticism of being either displaced, condensed or indirectly representative. Ezra Jennings' journal is presented as written at the time and is a direct report of the events as they unfold. This allows the reader the opportunity to focus on the narrative that is important: the dream narrative of Franklin Blake and the significance of the "primal scene" within this. Any aspect of displacement, condensation or indirect representation is in the dream and has to be understood in terms of what it tells of the repressed motivations of Blake's character. It is for this reason that Jennings tries to reconstruct, as best as possible, the conditions of the initial incident: the same rooms, the withdrawal of tobacco, the measure of laudanum.

Although it is needed for further confirmation that the joke of Mr Candy was the facilitating factor, it is not the proof of Blake's actions that is of importance, it is the opportunity of any insight into why he did what he did. The repetition is designed to transform the interpretation into the act itself, as the only way to find restitution of mind. It is significant that the first two phrases that Blake utters when under the effect of the laudanum are central to the concerns at the heart of the novel: "I wish I had never taken it out of the bank….It was safe in the bank"[226]; "How do I know?... The Indians may be hidden in the house?"[227] The former is concerned with the value of the diamond; this is the reason why Herncastle stole it, and also why Ablewhite steals it. Blake's concern is imbued

[226] Collins, p423

[227] Collins, p424

with this awareness of its being an object that would be prone to theft. This is Blake's own guilt concerning the colonial past that brought such an object into the house, confirmed by the latter statement as he is aware that the Indians would want the diamond. That this is phrased as a question is of importance as it removes any direct accusation of the Brahmin or negative characterisation. That he makes reference to "her" cabinet, and then repeats the phrase again, combined with the self-accusation of the first phrase, demonstrates that Blake's awareness of these issues of value and theft is retranslated in his mind as harm or death to Rachel. Through these few phrases the text restores the narrative of the romance to a position that readers find restores their ethical and aesthetic belief.

Freud classifies the motivation in dreams:

> A tissue of thoughts, usually a very complicated one, which has been built up during the day and has not been completely dealt with– "a day's residue"– continues during the night to retain the quota of energy– the "interest"– claimed by it, and threatens to disturb sleep. This "day's residue" is transformed by the dream-work into a dream and made innocuous to sleep. In order to provide a fulcrum for the dream-work, the "day's residue" must be capable of constructing a wish– which is not a very hard condition to fulfil. The wish arising from the dream-thoughts forms the preliminary stage and later the core of the dream… In the case of adults it seems to be a generally binding condition that the wish which creates the dream shall be one that is alien to conscious thinking– a repressed wish– or will possibly at least have reinforcements that are unknown to consciousness.[228]

[228] Sigmund Freud, (1905) Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious, pp160-1

The thoughts of the day, the "day's residue", is obvious in the events that lead to Blake stealing the diamond: in that given day there had been the concern of retrieving the diamond from the bank and the presence of the Brahmin that evening has emphasised this, and there is reference to both of these things in his dream. All of these events have been condensed in the dream-work of Blake into displacing through an indirect representation all of his concerns into the Moonstone. The need to protect Rachel by removing the danger of the Moonstone from her immediate vicinity was the wish that Blake wanted to have fulfilled. It is significant that the cause of this is Blake removing the repetition inherent in his addiction to cigars.

This is taking too simplistic a view of the events and concerns of the day. What is needed is the possibility of a parallel wish that is indirectly represented in the condensed and displaced form of the diamond. Looking closely at the other events of the day of the theft, the most important instance for Rachel and Blake is that they agree to marry. The Moonstone has equally been for Blake a signifier of Rachel coming of age as it is on the occasion of this event that he has had to bring it to her. The repressed wish that led to Blake being in Rachel's bedroom was the desire to express this progress in their relationship sexually. Rachel's silence as a result of seeing her lover in her bedroom could be reinterpreted as a reaction to the manifestation of this sexual desire. Unlike Clack, these erotic desires are daydream fantasies that need to find resolution as truth at this appropriate time in the enactment of the joke narrative. Jennings' role has been to lay bare these wishes as wishes rather than repressed guilty daydreams creating a satisfying reality that Collins emphasises by stressing Rachel's pregnancy in the novel's concluding chapters.

The finding of the diamond has no connection to the dream-work. The diamond has been the defamiliarising element throughout the text, as stated before. If the diamond had not been in the house then the complexity of the result of Mr Candy's joke would have been far less important. Even though Blake has initially stolen the Moonstone he does not have possession of it. The fact that the diamond goes missing is the displacement through condensation and indirect representation that leads to all the novel's complications. Once the joke as a signifier is revealed, Sergeant Cuff is able to apply the same logic that he did in the earlier part of the novel with the greater information at his disposal and conclude that Ablewhite is the guilty party. Cuff, by finally being allowed to adopt the true detective position, applies his personal reconstructive narrative to the situation in order to reach this conclusion, realising that the central repeating narrative has occurred once more.

The predisposition throughout the novel has been to be caught in a position of complicity with the narrative voice in the reader's exploration of the moral conscience, much as the reader is complicit with Watson in the Sherlock Holmes stories, but the fact of the tendentious nature of the voice is central to the thematic resonance of Collins' text. At the conclusion of the novel the reader is made to replace the displaced indirect representation of the text as Sergeant Cuff is forced to do: to remove the smut-influenced perception of the female characters and see their non-tendentious innocence, whilst equally realising that the seemingly innocent philanthropist, that image of Victorian idealism, Ablewhite is the true tendentious figure in the novel's society. The epilogue sections further continue in this manner by restoring the image of the Brahmin with the restoration of the Moonstone in its Indian setting. This final theft is most like that of Dupin in "The Purloined Letter" as, in their own narrative, they are the detectives retrieving that which offers the resolution to their "primal scene". This latter act also finally removes the initial tendentious

impulse enacted in the prologue and in line with the fact that Collins makes sure to inform us that Rachel is pregnant, confirming the satisfaction of the wish fulfilment of Blake; this narrative satisfies the desire for restored order that has been at the heart of the text. The guilt of the theft from India is removed for a new generation. The moral conscience has completed its dialogue and is now possessed with a society that no longer has a desire for x as there is a sense of coinherence, a society that has the dimension of Eden.

CHAPTER FIVE: THEDIVERGENCE OF CHRISTIE AND CHANDLER

The form of detective fiction is one that is open to, calls for, divergence in order to keep the reader interested. By divergence what is meant is the ability, from a common point that defines the genre, for the texts to be consistently surprising in the ways in which that common point is developed. De Quincey's identification of the dialogue between the aesthetic and the ethical was the starting point of the arguments of this thesis; it is therefore not surprising to find that the moment of greatest divergence in the genre's history is connected with the positioning of the reader in relation to these two opposing tendencies. Coinherence, that moment of satisfactory unification, will always be the purpose of the desire for x in the reading process of the consumer of detective fiction, but the side from which the reader approaches this commonality is the greatest point of variation.

The most significant point of divergence in the progress of the genre is the divergence from the "golden age" narrative form of the early part of the twentieth century, principally reckoned as being the period from 1918-1929, to the "hard boiled" form of the narrative associated with the period of 1929 onward. These dates are not exclusive as the "golden age" narrative form continued to be successful as both a literary and filmic technique concurrent with the development of the "hard boiled" style. The continued coexistence of the earlier form with the development meant to replace it is a specific historical example of divergence, which suggests the persistence of a choice between two routes. It is what motivates that choice that needs to be explored.

This in turn will lead to a more detailed examination of what Freud was referring to when putting forward the idea of the desire for x and how this can be the motivation for such a divergence of purpose in the reading process. In this I will look closely at how Freud's concept of the uncanny allows the reader to define the point at which the moral

conscience reacts within the seam in these texts. The uncanny offers connection with the concept of motifs, to the point that Freud uses this term in his description of the uncanny, as well as a process that is akin to the need to investigate.

Although not the last text that Christie wrote concerning the character, Curtain is billed as the last case of Poirot and was the last published within her lifetime, it having been written in the early nineteen forties and delayed with the intention of being published after her death. Curtain is a text that challenges the legacy of detective fiction that Christie was conscious of leaving, as such it offers questions about the "golden age" form of the genre in general and the nature of jouissance that the reader derives from this form. Curtain is a text that allows a focus upon the experience of reading detective fiction as one that leads the reader to articulate the sense of guilt that is felt within modern society.

In Curtain (1975) Christie extends the normal sense of the guilt of the small community, uncannily the same small community of her first text The Mysterious Affair at Styles (1920), in order to include even those staples of the genre not usually called into question, namely the detective and his sidekick. Christie raises an interesting question in relation to the repetition within the genre: how does one conclude a sequence of novels concerning a detective protagonist used numerous times? The conscious return to the location of the first narrative and the awareness that this text was to be a conclusion raises unique issues in the reading experience that are the antithesis of repetition.

The aesthetic motivation in our desire for x within this form of the genre is closely linked with the motivations that Freud illustrates in his examination of the death drive. Chandler's novel The Long Goodbye (1953) offers an examination of these issues in its focus upon three principal characters who are allegorically the three parts of the tri-partite mind, as well as illustrative of the ethical, aesthetic and the desire for commonality. In this

text it can be seen that the desire for x is less focused or rigid than the "golden age" text but ultimately has the same need for coinherence.

Freud's essay "The Uncanny" has offered a starting point to previous studies of literature[229], being one of Freud's few works that offers his own discussion upon this topic[230]. "The Uncanny" is a deliberately indefinite text that offers as many questions as it does answers in relation to why this "feeling" should be one that is so important to the process of reading. The uncanny offers a means through which to explore this desire for x, and a means for understanding a similar process in the detective text. Freud opens with the following statement:

> Only rarely does the psychoanalyst feel impelled to engage in aesthetic investigations, even when aesthetics is not restricted to the theory of beauty, but described as relating to the qualities of our feeling.[231]

The link between aesthetics and feelings that Freud expresses draws the distinction between the reader's response and the technical exercise of looking at how a text works artistically. Once analysis is working within the realm of the reader's experience the reader is looking at aesthetics not as an isolated approach but as part of a dialogue with the ethical. This

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[229] Notably Nicholas Royle's book The Uncanny (2003).

[230] Specifically in his close reading of Hoffman's "The Sandman".

[231] Sigmund Freud, (1919) "The Uncanny", in The Uncanny trans. David McClintock (2003) p. 123

dialogue occurs when a disturbance in the society of the world within which the reader has become immersed has been made apparent. This is the crux of Freud's essay.

Freud's first conclusion concerning the uncanny is that "there is no doubt that this belongs to the realm of the frightening, of what evokes fear and dread."[232] Following this conclusion, and the multiple definitions that Freud outlines in order to explore the nature of the word, it has been the tendency for theorists to latch upon the notion of "fear" in relation to the supernatural, making horror stories the province of their literary exploration. There is a link between the development of horror stories and crime stories; such authors as Poe and Collins wrote texts of equal regard in both genres, whilst Conan Doyle was highly successful in blurring the edges between genres in his most accomplished work The Hound of the Baskervilles. The reason for this close link is through this inducement of fear. The supernatural story offers a straightforward presentation of this, playing its inducement of fear explicitly as a means to shock and scare. However, fear is an equal contributor to the reader's experience of the detective text, being concerned with those areas of reality of which the reader has a natural fear of.

The parallels between Freud's description of the situations that allow for a sense of the uncanny and Auden's own description of the disturbance in society that brings the aesthetic and the ethical into dialogue in the detective text are clear. Freud describes the uncanny as "unhomely," following Jentsch he states: "For him the essential condition for the emergence of a sense of the uncanny is intellectual uncertainty."[233] This "intellectual uncertainty" is the dislocation of Auden, the destabilisation expressed by Shklovsky, what

[232] Freud, p123

[233] Freud, p125

Freud states from Schelling as being: "everything that was intended to remain secret, hidden away, and has come into the open."[234] What could be a clearer description of the starting point, the location of the primal scene, within a detective text: the point when something that is intended to remain a secret, the crime and the criminality, has become known, into the open? The uncanny is central to the detective text as it is an indicator of those points of disturbance which act like the dream-thoughts as sign posts of where transformation is needed in order to create the commonality between the aesthetic and the ethical that rebalances the society presented.

One of the motivations for the reader's moral conscience was the sense of an incipient guilt within society's construction; one of the functions of the uncanny is to remind the reader of that sense of incipient guilt and the need for the reasons for feeling such to be uncovered. This brings into the equation the ethical side of the dialogue, and it brings it to a prominent position: the aesthetic is important for indicating the need to uncover that which needs to be known, but it is the ethical that must adopt the dominant position as the transformative force in this form of narrative:

> By slow degrees a special authority takes shape within the ego; this authority, which is able to confront the rest of the ego, performs the function of self-observation and self-criticism, exercises a kind of psychical censorship, and so becomes what we know as the "conscience".[235]

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[234] Freud, p132

[235] Freud, p142

The conscience necessitates a sense of the double in the reader of the text through this deliberate divide in the reader's ego at this point. That this is a feature of the ego, argues Freud, suggests a closer link to a sense of primitive authority, the self-observation is a unique situation, one of an awareness of "primitive narcissism". The concept of "primitive narcissism" seems not to sit so easily with the partner element of the double that the reader becomes here, that role played by the function of "self-criticism". It is the conflict between the self-regard and the self-chastisement that is at work within this doubling that suggests that the moral conscience works to create a feeling within the reader that goes beyond solely that role of moral conscience. Rather it is the doubling nature that recognises both an aesthetic and ethical dimension to this authority that creates the sense of guilt. Guilt is narcissistic in this situation, as it is something that is not attached to anything other than the feeling that has arisen through contact with the uncanny. It is an aesthetic appeal that is being recognised. If the reader is feeling guilt at this point the moral conscience as an ethical understanding comes into being as a means to explore through observation why this should be the case.

Freud continues to define the narrative that this creation of the double brings to the reading experience in exploring this position of guilt:

> Yet it is only this content– which is objectionable to self-criticism– that can be embodied in the figure of the double: in addition there are all the possibilities which, had they been realised, might have shaped our destiny, and to which our imagination

> still clings, all the strivings of the ego that were frustrated by adverse circumstances, all the suppressed acts of volition that fostered the illusion of free will.[236]

It is interesting that Freud himself evokes a theological concept. If this primitive narcissism is guilt it is a similar sense of loss in the reader on contact with the sense of the uncanny to that which Auden expressed when he stated that the reader of detective fiction has a sense of "sin" when placed in the realm of the disrupted society of the detective text. The awareness this doubling situation of the uncanny creates is of the reader's potential, the possibilities that are open that s/he has not taken: the parallel narratives expressed by Shklovsky. It is central to the reading of the detective text that such doubling must occur, and in the golden age text, where the puzzle device of plot construction is paramount, even more so. In such texts the reader is being asked to think as a double, a perfect illustration being The Murder of Roger Ackroyd (1926) where in the double narrative of Dr Sheppard, the Watson-like narrator, and Dr Sheppard, the murderer, every statement of the text has such double layering. The reader must think from the moral conscience, as expressed here, taking the path that will lead to the means to transform those uncanny elements into the points of commonality that are the desire for x. The reader must recognise that s/he is also being asked to think as the criminal, as the person who laid the puzzle and is already aware of the solution. Part of the appeal is the enjoyment that the reader achieves through the connection with the puzzle maker, that possible reader who is the root of the sense of guilt, which the moral conscience is not going to allow the full expression of: the narcissistic primitive self who has complete free will to act without any such censure. The uncanny in

[236] Freud, p143

the detective text is expressed in the point of fear felt at the moment of this doubling, the point of being intellectually unsure as to which of these two paths is the one that the reader will truly follow.

It is within this process that we come upon a central aspect of the uncanny that is important to the understanding of the processes of the golden age detective text and the divergence of the hard-boiled style: the process of repetition. Freud states:

> In another set of experiences we have no difficulty in recognising that it is only the factor of unintended repetition that transforms what would otherwise seem quite harmless into something uncanny and forces us to entertain the idea of the fateful and the inescapable, when we should normally speak of "chance".[237]

The question that arises is to what degree, within detective fiction, would we call this repetition "unintended"? This further links with another dimension of the emotional state that Freud includes in his discussion of the uncanny: the concept of "helplessness". "Helplessness" was central to the need for the construction of the moral conscience, and so here it is a contributing factor to the occurrence of the moral conscience in the double. The role of the moral conscience in the above model structured an idea of the "fateful and the inescapable" that offered a dominant ethical position in the dialogue over the aesthetic. This is central to the golden age detective text because the reader could see the double presented as the puzzle setter, the criminal, and the puzzle solver, the detective.

This leads to an aspect of the uncanny that is unique to these texts:

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[237] Sigmund Freud, (1919) "The Uncanny"

> We can also call a living person uncanny, that is to say, when we credit him with evil intent. But this alone is not enough: it must be added that this intent to harm us is realised with the help of special powers.[238]

One of the principal distinctions between the golden age and the hard boiled detective texts is the presence of the third party narrator. As with the joke work the golden age detective text is established as a three part structure with a Watsonian figure acting as a location of access between these two figures. This figure imbues the aspect of helplessness that the narrative places the reader within but equally makes the situation one that is not unintended. A choice has been made to access this investigation and to go through the process of repetition that this dictates. This does not remove the fear, or the exploration of guilt; the uncanny is still a feature of the textual experience, but it does create a dislocation that emphasises a dominant position of the ethical.

Freud states that the uncanny person must have "evil intent", as far as the criminal is concerned the reader is certain of this. The criminal has committed a crime, an "evil" deed, and their presence must be seen as an uncanny position within the society. In the golden age narrative readers are aware, through the fact that they are rarely privy to the presentation of the detective directly, but also through elements like Holmes' almost mechanical nature or Poirot's compulsive tidying, that the detective is also an uncanny personage, one that is possessed of "super powers". The detective is not a figure that the reader can see as having "evil intent", but in the model of the double presented above this is

[238] Freud, p149

the case. In the aesthetic appreciation of the act of the criminal as puzzle setter, the creator of the doubling through the creation of guilt, the will to power of the moral conscience, the reader sees this competitor to the success of the aesthetic dimension as being "evil". The third party narrator, and in particular their relationship with the detective, becomes central to the success of such a narrative. If the reader is driven by the need to being "good", the Eden of Auden's analysis, s/he needs to be constantly reminded that this is the intended location by the third person narrator; the narrator's moral conscience doubles the reader whilst the admiration of the aesthetics of criminality is left in the weaker position.

It is in the light of this that the reasons for the expressions of anger that have greeted three of Agatha Christie's novels in the dénouement are apparent: The Murder of Roger Ackroyd (1926), Endless Night (1967) and Murder on the Orient Express (1934). In the first of these the famous conclusion is that the narrator Dr. Sheppard, who was new to this text, is revealed to be the murderer. Bayard[239] for one, albeit somewhat playfully, voiced outrage by presenting such a close analysis that it allows for a plausible alternative criminal. The point is that throughout this text it is the case that Sheppard is himself willing the solution. His moral conscience reflects and doubles the reader in his role of narrator because he has come to believe that, whilst his actions were aesthetically pleasing, the ethical side of the dialogue is the more convincing with regards to bringing a closure to the narrative destabilisation. This is seen in his acquiescence to Poirot's solution and his acceptance of Poirot's offer for him to commit suicide to lessen the scandal. Endless Night repeats the same trick but has no detective figure and little in the way of investigation. The novel falls more into the realm of psychological investigation rather than detective text and

[239] Pierre Bayard, (1998) Who Killed Roger Ackroyd?

as Michael Rogers, the narrator, proceeds through his narrative the reader realises that the dialogue between the aesthetic and the ethical is solely internal.

Murder on the Orient Express is more deceptive than either of these and conversely has been less controversial. It is the famous solution of this narrative that of the fourteen potential suspects who could have committed the murder of Mr Ratchett in the enclosed train carriage twelve are responsible. The exceptions are Poirot, our detective, and Countess Andrenyi, who turns out to be the last remaining member of the generation of her family who otherwise died through Ratchett's actions. In the denouement of this narrative Poirot offers two solutions, one that implicates all of the passengers, and one that is nonsensical in blaming an outside party who could not have entered the train. It is this latter solution that is to be given to the police. Why do readers accept this as a conclusion to a detective text? On the one side it is because it is again not really a detective text in the proper sense, rather it is a justice text where the criminal who must be brought to justice is the one executed in a way that Christie, by evoking the twelve people of the jury in her murderers, makes the reader believe is completely acceptable. It is in order to make this all the more about justice, rather than a more emotional, less intellectual reason such as revenge, that Countess Andrenyi must be the one linked passenger to not actually act as her connection is far too direct. Countess Andrenyi is the single symbol of the new generation that must continue with the taint of guilt removed. A similar role is given to the character of Judith in Curtain. The other reason is that, unlike the other Poirot narratives, there is no first person narrator; there is a third person style that is journalistic in its nature. Only rarely and with bias does this narrative guide our ethical position. The reader is never called in this text to explore the aesthetics of the criminal act, the kidnapping and murder of a child; rather s/he is called to

admire the ingenuity of those who do not let the criminal escape justice. A similar narrative is explored in And Then There Were None (1939) where all are criminal and all die.

Curtain stands as an unusual and uncanny text in the canon of Agatha Christie for a number of reasons. Firstly, although published in 1975 it was written far earlier, at some point in the Second World War, with two distinct intentions on the part of the author. In the belief that she could at any moment be killed in the war-time bombing raids, Christie placed the manuscript in her bank for publication after her death. On a practical domestic level it was left in trust for her daughter to have a legacy. More important to the purpose of this study it demonstrated that Christie had no intention of leaving the narrative of Poirot, which she started when writing The Mysterious Affair at Styles in 1916, without what she felt to be a fitting conclusion. Aware of the issues that Doyle had found with attempting to kill Holmes, she remained resolute in the fact that Curtain would not see publication until she herself died. However, she did capitulate under publisher pressure and released the text a matter of months before her own death. It is a text that is frequently concerned with the nature of life and death, written at a time when the author feared a sudden death, published when that death was known to be inevitable, a situation that reflects the one that Poirot himself finds he is in. Although written at the mid-point of her career, chronologically displaced from the Poirot novels that were written after but published before it, Curtain appears to be a commentary on the genre of detective fiction and Christie's own contributions to it. It is one of her most structurally complex and intertextual narratives. It is a text that is at heart about repetition, the feeling of being buried alive, the incipient fear of a violent act, the disturbance of the atmosphere, the awareness of the double and most of all the nature of guilt and the pursuit of x. Curtain is an uncanny text.

It would be easy to go through Curtain following the chronology and exploring the systematic nature of the way in which Christie allows the text to unfold, but this would not best serve the expression of the uncanny dimension of the text and how it works with readers. The chronology is one of the uncanny elements that is most unsettling. As such I will analyse the text in relation to the following general areas: atmosphere, repetition, the pursuit of x, the intertextual narrative of Hastings and the supplementary postscript of Poirot. It is in this last that the intention of this text as a closing document becomes clear: at the close of his career Poirot is for the first time allowed to talk to readers directly. It is a postscript not just to this text but, as a supplement, to the whole of Poirot's investigations.

From the opening the reader is aware that this is a different form of the Poirot novel as related by Hastings. At the time of publishing this was the first appearance of Hastings since 1938 and The ABC Murders (1935). The text reintroduces the character through a sequence of rhetorical questions:

> Who is there who has not felt a sudden startled pang at reliving an old experience, or feeling an old emotion?
>
> "*I have done this before*…"
>
> Why do those words always move one so profoundly?[240]

Such is voiced the central question of this form of detective fiction: have we done this before? Is this to be another narrative that will follow the same puzzle patterns and investigative process that readers expect from the golden age detective structure? The

[240] Agatha Christie, (1975) Curtain, p5

"startled pang" echoes the realisation of the uncanny in the déjà vu of being presented with the repetition of feeling that moves the reader at the sense of "reliving". The opening establishes the crux of the novel's theme through this wording, the point that the novel stresses as being important to the reader in this form of text is this chance to re-live, to experience again a sense of vitality that may appear to have been lost. That Hastings is choosing to re-live is multiple– he has returned to Styles, the manor house that was the location of his first investigation with Poirot, he returns to work with Poirot, he returns as a single man for the first time since the second novel that featured him, Murder on the Links (1923), finally he returns to the company of his daughter. The displacement is present in the other areas to which he returns but the latter offers the clearest example of displacement from the earlier narrative as parental concerns were not an issue for the character at that time. Styles house is no longer a private residence but a boarding house, a displacement in the modern world where the older form of gentry living has now been replaced by a commercial need. Poirot is an invalid confined to a wheelchair, and in the masterstroke of displacement from his previous descriptions, now the possessor of a wig and false moustache. Finally, the sense of mourning and age makes Hastings a different form of single man as a widower, one who sees death's touch as something real and inevitable. The need to re-live is a desire as well as inevitability; Hastings may have wished to simply repeat but the reader is made aware that the displacement means that this cannot happen. It is the combination of these elements, and the way that they impact upon the narrative style of the character, that lead to the uncanny atmosphere of the text.

The uncanny feeling of displacement in the repetition immediately contributes to the sense of unease within the text. This displacement is imbued with images of death and mortality that are for once linked to the central figures of detective and sidekick rather than

the dislocated society into which they enter. This atmosphere of the uncanny cannot help but direct the reader in terms of his/her emotional, and ethical, preoccupations as this is similarly a preoccupation of Hastings. But why does it override to such a degree in this text rather than others? For one there is the differing element that this is not a narrative happened upon by chance. It is usually the case that in the initial stages of one of Christie's Poirot cases he has no intention of investigating a crime until it either happens through the coincidence of his being there or he is called upon by the police who have up to that point been incapable. Curtain offers an immediate contrast in making Poirot a proactive pursuer of the crime.

Hastings is going to Styles because Poirot has requested his presence. This is presented in the form of a letter that the reader could take as being a prescript to match the postscript from Poirot that follows Hastings' narrative. The reader is made aware, through a number of uncanny phrases, of the way in which Hastings' narrative preoccupations have been directed. Firstly the letter[241] evokes "old memories", in describing the proprietor's murder in the seemingly throwaway phrase "If it were me I would take a hatchet to her!" Poirot talks of "reliving the past", comments on the unidiomatic nature of his own language and the necessity of transformation in converting from French to English. He states that he has requested the presence of Hastings' daughter Judith, and ends enigmatically with the phrase "It is all arranged, so make no histories." In brief the reader is being presented with features that the text will explore as central to the narrative drive, features which the reader will see Poirot make explicit in his postscript. Hastings' text is encased within these two

[241] Agatha Christie, (1975) Curtain, pp6-7

texts of direct speech from Poirot; it is buried alive within them constantly, informed by the greater illumination that reflection upon them gives to his final text.

It is the last phrase "so make no histories" that offers the greatest displacement to Hastings' text. Poirot has himself made comment on his unidiomatic way of using the English language before offering this queer phrase. The meanings are multiple and each offers a different dimension to the way in which the narrative that Hastings presents is read. One prominent understanding comes under the assumption that Poirot is, as in the rest of the note, using English, albeit ungrammatically: that Poirot is requesting that Hastings, against his previous habit, does not record this text as a history. The reader is presented at the outset with a call from the detective to negate the record of the detection. By reading the text of Hastings there is complicity in his transgression of this desire that provides the reader with a further sense of displacement from that which would normally be expected. The reader realises the significance of the first part of the phrase "it is all arranged", the case has been solved, there is no need for Hastings to make a history of the investigation as there is no history to tell that Hastings will himself be party to. If this is the case then what is the central purpose of Hastings narrative?

Two further interpretations of this phrase raise the double issue of the use of and precision of language, as these are the means through which the central criminal commits his crimes. If the reader takes Poirot's English to be imprecise the supposition is that he is calling upon Hastings to not be upset at the fact that he has been presumptuous in arranging things without consulting him, in the sense of being hysterical. If so the reader can take it that there is, as later phrases seem to confirm, a slight resentment in Hastings at being played with by Poirot to the latter's seeming amusement. But the mistake of "historie" for "hysterical," appears to be an idiomatic transformation too far, even in relation to the

imprecise English Christie has had Poirot use before. It is more in the realm of aural pun than the written form and seems to rather feminise Hastings. As such the reader has to take it to be extremely precise, as we know this is the wont of Poirot in most things, albeit extremely precise in the wrong language even though, unlike the other French phrases in the note it is neither italicised nor spelt correctly. The phrase "faire de histoires" in French means "make no fuss." Poirot is requesting that Hastings does not do anything that could make him conspicuous. Again this is something that the latter directives of Poirot, requesting that Hastings simply be his eyes and ears, seem to confirm, but why request this beforehand when in the past the very purpose of the presence of Hastings and Poirot has been to make the greatest possible "fuss" by destabilising the society through the means to uncover the criminal? It is an uncanny phrase, even more so in the last, most concrete interpretation as the imprecision in its presentation suggests a sense of imprecision in Poirot. In all interpretations it appears to negate the conventions that Christie has led her readers to expect within her Poirot novels and thus creates a tension all of its own.

We return to the sense of re-living. In the early chapters, the reader is presented with an image of Poirot as a figure who is dying, but also realise in the general atmosphere that Hastings presents, that he is metaphorically dying as well. This is present in the negative tone that runs throughout the text. Christie conveys this through a number of devices: weather is only ever commented upon at times of portent, so little is said of other weather conditions that the pathetic fallacy evoked is almost a parody of the convention. The majority of chapters open with phrases such as: "Nothing is so sad, in my opinion, as the devastation wrought by age." (ch.2); "I went down to dinner that night feeling that the whole of life had become suddenly unreal." (ch.4); "My narrative of the days spent at Styles must necessarily be somewhat rambling." (ch.7); "The days passed. It was an

unsatisfactory time, with its uneasy feeling of waiting for something." (ch.8); "There is something about writing down an anti-climax in cold blood that is somewhat shattering to one's self-esteem." (ch.13); and finally "I don't want to write about it at all" (ch.18). The pervading mood is of a lack of clarity, reluctance, unease, and a general sense of fear that becomes ultimately inexpressible. The incipient fear that Freud characterised as a feature of the uncanny is a continual feature in the language that Hastings uses. The feeling is of a dread that there will be something that will happen from the real of the unreal.

This continues into Hastings' descriptions of the characters. In general Styles is populated by a stock company of Christie regulars: the army Colonel, the serious scientist, the bed-ridden young wife, the aging couple financially worried, the naïve bachelor, the woman in fear of becoming an old maid. In the climate of a holiday atmosphere the reader expects Hastings to present them as in other texts. Rather the reader is presented with the following: "Behind the veneer of her charming old lady manner, I caught a glimpse of flint-like hardness."[242]; "He had a vague, rather nervous manner."[243]; "He limped."[244]; "something of a lady-killer"[245]; "Her movements were restless and jerky– obviously a woman of nerves. Handsome in a hag-ridden kind of way."[246] The negativity that Hastings includes in his presentation further adds to the general downcast tone of his narrative. Readers are displaced by his absolute pessimism with regard to the characters that he is, in

[242] Christie, p9

[243] Christie, p10

[244] Christie, p10

[245] Christie, p17

[246] Christie, p31

generic form, once again meeting. There is a startling contrast to the youthful vibrancy and the optimism that pervaded his narrative in the earlier texts where desire to see the good in people makes Hastings unable to see the culprit as Poirot does, not least in The Mysterious Affair at Styles. There is a sense that Hastings is now aware that anyone can be a murderer, and indeed in previous texts each of these stock characters has been so. He must suspect anyone and everyone as he knows the culprit could be anywhere. It is in this that Christie establishes her twists, but also indicates a debate that runs through the text: the theme of the potential and justification of murder.

This is a theme that the reader is called upon to engage with throughout the reading process. This arises most strongly through the inclusion, within these stock characters, of Hastings' daughter Judith. In the previous Poirot and Hastings narratives it has been the tendency that the pair had no strong connection with the crime except as investigators. The exceptions to this would be the previous narrative at Styles, where the family involved were friends of Hastings, and Murder on the Links in which one of the characters eventually becomes Hastings' wife. Neither of these offers the destabilisation that is offered by Judith within Curtain. In the former the connection is one of acquaintance and does not rule out the potential to suspect. In the latter Cinders only becomes romantically involved with Hastings after the conclusion of the investigation, when all suspicion of her being the culprit is cleared. With Judith the connection is much stronger for obvious reasons, Judith being Hastings' child, and Christie builds into this the destabilisation of there being a real vested interest for Hastings in finding the mystery's solution.

Judith is introduced in the following way:

> My remaining child, Judith, was the one whom secretly I had always loved best, although I had never for one moment understood her. A queer, dark, secretive child, with a passion for keeping her own counsel, which had sometimes affronted and distressed me. My wife had been more understanding. It was, she assured me, no lack of trust or confidence on Judith's part, but a kind of fierce compulsion. But she, like myself, was sometimes worried about the child. Judith's feelings, she said, were too intense, too concentrated, and her instinctive reserve deprived her of any safety valve. She had queer fits of brooding silence and a fierce, almost bitter power of partisanship.[247]

The description is loaded with the feeling of the uncanny within a person. Judith is "secretive", silent, "queer", and caught in a "compulsion". Hastings does not understand her; he is "distressed" by her, yet at the same time she is paradoxically the cause of a secret of his own, that he "loved her best". What is more, unlike the other characters presented at Styles, not least Hastings, she has "passion", and it is in this that she offers a further destabilising force as she appears to be the character most likely to act on something within the course of the text. This passion is how Judith symbolises the presence of the ghost within the text. In this passage, and others that follow, not least one of major significance to the text as a whole, Judith makes Hastings bring the voice and presence of his dead wife to his narrative. When dealing with Judith, the uncanny presents the narrative position of a character that symbolises both life and death, the past and the future, for our narrating character.

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[247] Christie, p7

This comes out in the development of Judith as a character in conflict with her father. Judith describes her employer's wife with the following dismissive remarks: "She never reads anything but the cheapest kind of novel…. She's a very feminine sort of woman."[248] Judith represents a modernity that is not only in conflict with the society around her but in the former statement seems to present her in conflict with Christie's own readership who would recognise such a remark as being, perhaps unfairly, one that was levelled at Christie's work. Judith is educated, concerned with her work, and rejects the idea of marriage despite her father trying to draw her into such thoughts. Such a character is not uncommon in Christie's work. The stock character that Christie most frequently used was such a resourceful young female character which adds to the destabilisation. In Judith we see the character who we know should not be suspected, but as the narrative proceeds it becomes clear that she is to be suspected, and of multiple crimes. As Hastings sees it the true conclusion is:

> Do you understand the thoughts that came into my mind– the thoughts that had lain under the surface for some time?
>
> Judith with a bottle in her hand, Judith with her young passionate voice declaring that useless lives should go to make way for useful ones….
>
> ….But not Judith. Not my lovely grave young Judith.
>
> And yet how strange Poirot had looked. How those words had rung out: 'You may prefer to say 'Ring down the curtain"…

[248] Christie, pp26-7

…Was the whole heart of the tragedy Judith, my daughter?[249]

There is a stylistic return to the rhetorical voice that the novel opened with, except now we are in a different form. In this speech Hastings asks the reader to explore the concept that all along the killer had been not just the stock heroine figure, but also the narrator's daughter. It is of interest that this is framed so rhetorically when a text such as The Murder of Roger Ackroyd, in which the revelation that the narrator is the killer, is not. The destabilisation in this conclusion is that the reader has a solution that the narrator has no wish to accept. The reader is left with Hastings having to construct an implausible alternative solution to Judith being the killer, like that constructed by Poirot in Murder on the Orient Express, where he chooses to cast Poirot's valet as the killer. This brings the real tragic note to the conclusion of Hastings' narrative. It is for this reason that the reader needs the postscript provided by Poirot. By making history Hastings has managed to be buried alive by his own rhetoric in a way that his previous, impersonal narratives had not. Hastings becomes engulfed by the uncanny.

Before discussing the role of the postscript attention has to be drawn to the mystery that Curtain presents and the debate on the issue of murder, looking at the figure of X, and the actual crime. The previous novel that had featured Hastings had been The ABC Murders, this text had featured a criminal who seemed to have the sole motive of killing his victims in alphabetical order. It is discovered by Poirot that this was all part of an elaborate plan to distract from the true intended victim whose name began with "B". In the text Christie attempted to distract the reader through having sections narrated not by Hastings

[249] Christie, pp163-4

but by someone who appeared to be the killer. In a twist this turned out not to be the case. Christie can be seen to be beginning to contemplate ideas that were not common at the time of her writing, the ideas of the serial killer, and more importantly the motiveless killer. In a puzzle text, such as the golden age narrative, it is the case, as Auden argued, that there must be a connection in the society that allows for there to be suspects who are imbued with the potential of being guilty. That the villain be the one that is most involved in that guilt. Curtain presents a far more destabilising potential: that in the dialogue with the ethical there could be such a radical potential in the aesthetic that it could lead to the committing of a crime simply because it gives enjoyment in itself. Freud had touched upon this in "Criminals from a Sense of Guilt". In many ways this is the obverse of Murder on the Orient Express where the murder of Ratchett can be seen as the overriding strength of the ethical in the dialogue concerning the crime, a side of the argument that Poirot also chooses to advocate. Christie appeared aware of this when she has Hastings relate the following remembrance:

> I recalled a story I had read of a series of purposeless murders- the clue being that the victims had happened to serve as members of a jury, and the crimes had been committed by a man whom they had condemned.[250]

Hastings is not involved in Murder on the Orient Express and is here remembering the case wrongly and by doing so comes closer to the truth of the case he is involved in than at any other time. Christie has deliberately alluded to her earlier text as a means of offering a

[250] Christie, p24.

chance of achieving the solution, for the reader knows from the previous text that sometimes an extreme act, and an unexpected one, can be called upon in order to reassert the ethical when the aesthetic has taken too strong a hold.

What the reader desires is the satisfaction that arrives when s/he finds the commonality of x in the destabilising elements, those moments of the feeling of the uncanny that allow for the transformation. Curtain is a text that takes this position literally in its construction by making the central criminal X. Throughout the text the reader is aware that Poirot knows who the criminal is but refuses to tell Hastings, simply marking them as X. The reason for this substitution of name is that Poirot is trying to find conclusive evidence that could actually implicate the criminal in the crimes:

> There is a certain person- X. in none of these cases did X (apparently) have any motive in doing away with the victim. In one case, as far as I have been able to find out, X was actually two hundred miles away when the crime was committed. Nevertheless I will tell you this. X was on intimate terms with Etherington, X lived for a time in the same village as Riggs, X was acquainted with Mrs Bradley. I have a snap of X and Freda Clay walking together in the street, and X was near the house when old Matthew Litchfield died.[251]

X is the point of commonality in the five cases that Poirot outlines. The nearest other point in common is that four of the five involve adultery of some sort, but the last is concerning an abusive father, thus the connection is not complete. There is no motive and each crime

[251] Christie, p21

has been perpetrated by someone, not X, who was completely conceivable as the criminal. There is no mystery in the crime, only in how to catch the criminal in a way that would support the ethical side of the argument. This creates the ethical crisis that leads to Hastings' irresolute conclusion in the text.

The text becomes concerned with the issues of motive and justification in killing. The discussion on euthanasia that is featured in Chapter Eleven is the most obvious example of this concern. On first reading the discussion appears to be simply an intriguing diversion that is designed to draw the distinction, and conflict, between Judith and Hastings, not least in his daughter's assertion that a relative should be allowed to choose a sufferer's time of death. Hastings' own sense of mortality is brought to focus again. But what is clear here is that there is a strong point of ethical direction being presented by Christie before her text actually moves into recorded crime within its chronology. Importantly it is Judith who gives the most sustained argument:

> If I had a– a personal motive, I couldn't do anything. Don't you see?" she appealed to us all. "It's got to be absolutely impersonal. You could only take the responsibility of–of ending a life if you were quite sure of your motive. It must be absolutely selfless."
>
> "All the same," said Norton, "you wouldn't do it."
>
> Judith insisted: "I would. To begin with I don't hold life as sacred as all you people do. Unfit lives, useless lives– they should be got out of the way. There's so much

> *mess* about. Only people who can make a decent contribution to the community ought to be allowed to live. The others ought to be put painlessly away."[252]

What Christie achieves in this interchange is a number of subtle things that are necessary in order to make her text work. On the first hand she makes the reader outraged at the eugenic theorising of natural selection that Judith voices, but at the same times makes it clear that Judith could not be X. Judith's conclusions come from what is stressed as being her overly scientific, black and white, outlook upon life; logically she voices an argument that is sustainable theoretically but not ethically accepted. It is this lack of an ethical dimension, and her dismissal of the "sacred", that rule her out. None of X's crimes involved the removal of anyone who meets Judith's criteria, their crimes are moral crimes, the breaking of commandments, furthermore they were not "put painlessly away". Christie restores Judith by having her find love with a doctor whose theories offer a slight divergence from hers. Dr Franklin voices a similar disregard for people who are "useless" but sees his work as one of finding ways to make them "useful" first before resorting to their being put away. It is important that Christie only makes a slight correction in the opinion expressed within Judith's restoration. Judith must remain as a position in the debate over what is right or wrong in order to contribute to the continued sense of moral ambiguity within the novel.

What this interchange also shows is Christie's subtle way of presenting the reader with the real criminal. The only person in this discussion who is willing to challenge Judith and to make her more resolute is Norton who turns out to be X. By having Norton as the challenging voice the reader has a revelation of both culprit and method: by stating "you"

[252] Christie, p97

he implies that he would act in the way that Judith has explained. By making her more resolute he is pushing her to a more extreme point that may make her contemplate acting in the way she states as the man in whom she is in love, Dr Franklin, is overburdened by a sickly wife.

It is Mrs Franklin's death, and the opinion voiced in the debate, that draw Hastings to suspecting his daughter, particularly as the couple announce their engagement quickly after Mrs Franklin's death. This raises the other element of the textual debate concerning motive, the use of intertextuality. Although not directly referenced, the image of an "o'er hasty" marriage following someone dying of a poisoning immediately calls to mind Hamlet and this is not Christie's only reference to this text. Poirot in his postscript compares himself to Hamlet in his hesitation to act. Elsewhere in the text there is reference to Julius Caesar when Norton quotes Cassius whilst discussing luck, and Othello and Iago in particular are mentioned as part of a crossword clue. Finally at Mrs Franklin's funeral Hastings is accosted by an "old woman" who is described as "ghoulish" and who plants in his mind the idea that it had not been, as the inquest had concluded, suicide. It is this conversation that has a causal link to Hastings suspecting his daughter and calls to mind the old man in Macbeth who raises the doubt in Rosse and MacDuff's minds[253], whilst in her "ghoulish" nature similarly evoking the witches. This frequent intertextual referencing of Shakespeare's tragedies offers an uncanny sense of the fear of the inevitable whilst also being a point of commonality that readers should focus upon. If the reader focuses upon the characters that are brought to mind by these intertextual links, Cassius, Iago, Claudius, and the old man/ witches, there arises an awareness of a model in Shakespearean tragedy for the

[253] Act II, Scene iv, lines 10-13

criminality of X. Each of these characters through suggestion, Cassius to Brutus, Iago to Othello, Claudius to Laertes, the old man to Rosse and MacDuff, the Witches to Macbeth, brings about a death that they desire but are not directly a party to perpetrating. Christie is equally subtle in offering the false lures of Judith being cast in the Claudius role. Having her father state "there has always hung about her a suggestion of tragedy," the reader is led to expect Judith's narrative to be a tragic one and misinterpret these references to Shakespearean tragedy in the same way that Hastings does. It is important that Poirot casts himself as Hamlet, as this offers an awareness of the other side to the similar moral debate which that play explores.

One of the strongest uncanny moments in Christie's work is in the conclusion of Chapter Twelve:

> I sat there waiting. I thought of my dead wife. Once, under my breath, I murmured: "You understand, darling, I'm going to save her."
>
> She had left Judith in my care, I was not going to fail her.
>
> In the quiet and the stillness I suddenly felt that Cinders was very near to me.
>
> I felt almost as though she were in the room.
>
> And I sat still grimly, waiting.[254]

Hastings has become so concerned with his daughters' safety that he chooses to do what would appear to be an unthinkable act in a Christie novel: he is going to murder Allerton with a poisoned drink. Christie readers have had the revelation of the narrator having

[254] Christie, p111

committed murder before, but in neither of those cases was this explored in the open in the way it is here. The image of Hastings at the height of his despair acting under the suggestion of Norton whilst conjuring up the image of his dead wife is a singularly disturbing and unsettling one. The text has moved as far away from the ethical position that the reader cannot help but question, as he was the one invited by Poirot, whether Hastings is in fact X? This scene illustrates the main argument of the novel, that anyone can ultimately be driven to kill. The potential, as Christie presents it, is for the moment of commonality to never be reached, on the understanding that modern society does not allow it. The reader must recognise that there is the potential that the guilt felt may not have the safe solution that has been expected from her previous novels.

Chapter Thirteen is split into four sections, the first deals with Hastings' reactions when he awakens and realises what he almost achieved the night before. Hastings' sleep, the reader finds, in Poirot's postscript, is due to his having been secretly given a sleeping pill by Poirot. His restoration to the position of an ethical force is by an act of love. An ethical position is reasserted in the narrative voice but it is one that is still in fear of there being a crime committed. So far in the novel, outside of X's five pre-text crimes, the nearest to an actual incident is Colonel Luttrell accidentally shooting his wife. Hastings as a narrator is impatient, as indeed seems to be the whole household, as sections two and three deal with a succession of conversations concerning the ominous nature of the weather, and the atmosphere of foreboding in the household. The reader is aware that something must happen. By making so much so obvious Christie is able to distract the reader from the truth of what does happen.

Section four concerns a party in Mrs Franklin's room where she is serving coffee. The guests, with the exception of Hastings, go onto the balcony to watch a shooting star.

Hastings remains in an emotional state concerning memories of a similar event with his wife, to disguise this he reaches for a copy of Othello on a book case. In order to get the book he has to revolve the book case. Coffee is drunk, later Mrs Franklin dies of poisoning. There is no reason to connect Mrs Franklin's death with the earlier scene, except that Christie has played her scene in such plain sight that even "The Purloined Letter" seems disguised in comparison. What is important here is the way in which she distracts from the points of commonality that the reader feels s/he must be looking for, using the false lures that Žižek illustrated.

The scene's initial distraction is that it is structured around a literal puzzle. The gathered party are together trying to solve a crossword. This puzzle should immediately raise the reader's interest through the uncanny doubling of having a puzzle so central to a puzzle plot. There is an uncanny prescience not only in the actual solutions but also in the potential alternative solutions offered:

> "The chaps between the hills are unkind."
>
> "Tormentor," said Boyd Carrington quickly.
>
> "Quotation: "And Echo whate'er is asked her answers"- blank. Tennyson. Five letters."…
>
> …Elizabeth Cole said from the window: "The Tennyson quotation is: "And Echo whate'er is asked her answers Death"."…
>
> …""Jealousy is a green-eyed monster," this person said."
>
> "Shakespeare," said Boyd Carrington.
>
> "Was it Othello or Emilia?" said Mrs Franklin.
>
> "All too long. The clue is only four letters."

"Iago."[255]

The reference to a "tormentor", the sense of repetition of "death" voiced in the Tennyson quotation, the reference, rather ironically from Mrs Franklin, to "Othello or Emilia" (the victims of the true solution "Iago"), all point to what is about to happen. A death in a couple that is perceived to be unhappy is the common point. This leads us directly to the Franklins. What is so clever about the construction here is that the reader is not biased to support one Franklin as murderer over the other. Both characters have, to this point, been presented in both positive and negative terms with an equal motive to murder the other, but not, if we remember the logical mind of Dr Franklin, the same susceptibility. Mrs Franklin has called the party, she has made the coffee, she is the potential murderer, but she is the one who dies. The reader is again presented with the ghostly figure of Hastings' wife, by reaching for the copy of Othello when caught by his daughter in an emotional state Hastings revolves the book case on which the Franklin's coffee cups stand and switches who receives the poison.

The only murder that has occurred in the text so far has been, albeit unwittingly, committed by our narrator. In The Murder of Roger Ackroyd Dr Sheppard's omission may have disguised from the reader of the fact that he was the actual murderer but he was aware of the fact in himself. At the conclusion of Hastings' narrative, when he is suspecting his own daughter, Hastings is in himself unaware of the consequences of his own actions. One cannot help but think of the Shakespeare tragedy so far missing: King Lear. The truth is revealed in Poirot's postscript but Hastings does not comment upon what is a complex

[255] Christie, pp123-4

ethical issue presented here: as he acted without knowledge is Hastings actually a murderer? How could he prove he did not act with knowledge? Does the reader take his word for it when it is known that only a few pages prior to this he was intending to poison Allerton? Does the action not provide the opportunity that his daughter desires? The text does not offer us any solutions to these questions except to make it clear that the one murdered was the one with the intention to murder. The distinction here is the same one that was raised by Judith in the earlier discussion of euthanasia, that there is a distinction between killing and murder. Do readers conclude Poirot's postscript with the desire that Hastings be punished or do they accept it as a strangely apt and utilitarian conclusion that was needed to meet the desire for x that inhabits the text?

The presentation of the postscript is an indication of Christie's awareness of the way in which the detective functions within the golden age genre. The detective is a supplementary figure, someone who has entered the society after the case of the crime and has no particular link with any member of the society that is suspected. By making it a postscript to the Hastings narrative, Christie has literally made Poirot's contribution supplementary and there is an uncanny dimension to the dislocation of this contribution. Throughout the text Poirot has been an uncanny figure, a presence who is largely absent from the action that is presented. With the exception of Hastings, and occasionally Judith, there is little connection made between Poirot and the other members of the Styles household. He remains enclosed, entombed even, in his room and his infirmity. The reader is informed that Hastings' purpose is to be Poirot's "eyes and ears", doubling Hastings fulfilment of this role for the reader. An aspect of the displacement element of the text is that the reader is more closely aligned to the position of the detective than is common in a golden age text. What Christie is doing in this is reiterating the modus operandi that Poirot

has stated consistently from his first appearance in The Mysterious Affair at Styles. His process of detection is simply one of reflection and thought. Detection is for Poirot a process of language, a finding of those points of commonality that feel uncanny and lead to the potential of the solution. Because of the distinctive method of X, also a function of language, the reader realises that there is a crisis in method presented to Poirot. What is more, it is made twofold by the actions of Hastings. For this reason Christie breaks one of her most solid conventions and has Poirot talk to the reader directly.

In previous investigations the conclusion of the text has been that Poirot has delivered an often lengthy denouement that has tied together the moments of commonality that lead to the solution. This has always been reported by a third person who has confirmed for the reader the ethical correctness of what the reader has been told. Even in Murder on the Orient Express, where there is no third person narrator, there is the character of Monsieur Bouc, Poirot's friend and chairman of the Wagon-Lit, to support the given solution. In the direct narrative there is no one but the implied reader of Hastings, and there is a major displacement for Hastings on an ethical level that makes this ethical position all the more complex. The reader has to assume a similar position in order to fully identify with the society that is presented. The reader has to ask whether Poirot's postscript performs this function as it is only in the ability to restore complicity with Hastings as the implied reader that the reader can ethically accept the final solution as the point of commonality between the aesthetic and the ethical.

The solution casts Poirot himself as the murderer. Poirot directly enters the discussion on the capacity to murder when he states: "Everyone is a potential murderer. In

everyone there arises from time to time the *wish* to kill– though not the *will* to kill."[256] Christie had already established this point in the prescript when he states of Mrs Luttrell "If it were me I would take a hatchet to her!"[257] Such idle phrases litter our language but rarely are they pure intention. Rather they are simply momentary fantasy. The method of Norton, X, has been to follow the example of Iago, to work upon these idle phrases and turn "*wish*" into "*will*"– as was shown by Hastings being brought to the point where he almost killed Allerton, and later Mrs Franklin to kill her husband. Norton's method is to make the daydream a reality for the person whose guilty fantasy he has overheard. For Poirot what is important is the matter of susceptibility, but also the motive that lies behind this transformation. For Hastings he was driven by a desire to protect, a selfless act. That this was misplaced is what led to Poirot acting to protect his friend. Mrs Franklin, in contrast, is acting from a purely selfish motivation which allows for the following conclusion when Hastings inadvertently kills her: "It spared the innocent and slew the guilty."[258] Poirot lies at the inquest and confirms that Mrs Franklin committed suicide. He does this convincingly because "I am a man experienced in the matter of committing murder- if *I* am convinced it is suicide, well then, it will be accepted as suicide."[259] Poirot acts to allow for the greater protection of society. Rather than taking a purely ethical state of right and wrong as being black and white he takes a utilitarian position. In this, because only the guilty, the selfish, suffered, the reader, like the jury at the inquest, takes Poirot's conclusions as being

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[256] Christie, p169.

[257] Christie, p6.

[258] Christie, p181.

[259] Christie, p182.

ethically acceptable and restores the connection with Hastings. This conclusion of Poirot's also reaffirms the gist of what Judith had argued, although with more practical examples, restoring her in the reader's ethical favour.

This leads the reader to accept the greater shock that is included in this postscript: that Poirot becomes murderer. It is made clear that because he only uses language and influence, and does not have direct involvement, Norton is beyond the law. The question is how does one punish such a figure in an ethically acceptable way? There is a further parallel with Murder on the Orient Express. There the victim was a known criminal untouchable by the law; he is killed, as this is the only way in which justice is to be served. The same solution arises here and Poirot is the only person who can commit that murder. The same utilitarian decision must be made; the guilty must die to protect the innocent. This raises implications when discussing the series detective: if Poirot can simply bypass the conventions of the law by killing the suspect, can the reader accept him as an ethical guide?

It is for this reason that Curtain had to be the final investigation that Christie published concerning Poirot. The murder of Norton is a "greatest hits" selection of the career that Christie had given Poirot: it involves a faked illness, Poirot not being the invalid he claimed; a displaced servant as Curtiss is sent elsewhere; a poisoning, namely Norton drugged with sleeping pills; a double, for without his wig and moustache Poirot is seen to resemble Norton; a false witness, with Hastings seeing Poirot as Norton and not recognising him; a locked-room, in which Norton appears to have shot himself; and an uncanny clue that makes the culprit apparent, where Poirot's sense of order and symmetry making him shoot Norton in the centre of the forehead rather than the temple. We know that in other circumstances these are things that Poirot would immediately pick up on to

bring the culprit into the open, and so he does here. That Poirot allows himself to die by denying himself his heart medicine is the equally justified conclusion, offering as it does an uncanny symmetry to the need to murder Norton. By killing himself Poirot is removing another murderer from society. There is in this an echo of Doyle's conclusion for Sherlock Holmes in "The Final Problem". Moriarty, like Norton, is a criminal whose guilt is known but has remained outside of the direct province of the law, Holmes must kill him and in doing so kill himself. This in itself is an uncanny repetition and raises a question concerning serial detectives.

Christie was aware that the only means of closure for the readers of the Poirot novels was to completely rule out the potential for further repetition. It is for this reason that she kept the novel in reserve for the point of her own death as she was aware that Doyle had attempted a similar closure only to be drawn back. Curtain effectively concludes Poirot as an aesthetic and ethical force. His crossing the line, although acceptable in the context as established by the novel, would have made his position unacceptable in further investigations. As Hastings concludes in his short addition to Poirot's postscript concerning the uncanny nature of the symmetry of Norton's gunshot wound: "The mark on Norton's forehead- it was like the brand of Cain…"[260] By committing murder, like Cain, Poirot is exiled from the potential to ever return to Eden. If this is what Auden states that the reader of these texts desires than s/he needs to find a new guide. Curtain as a text illustrates the extreme of the pursuit of x, of the desire for x, where everyone has the capacity to kill, and

[260] Christie, p188.

those least expected to do. Robin Woods[261] has argued that in this way Curtain represents Christie's awareness of the true crime genre as a recent development in detective fiction, and in this the motiveless killer is the true creation of the real. There is truth in this but what it truly shows is that there will always be a conclusion in the dialogue between the ethical and the aesthetic that goes further, and will have more casualties, than the reader is willing to embrace in their pursuit of the desire for x. The reader has a choice in Curtain, the reading can finish at the end of Hastings' text, it is open ended with two possible solutions like Murder on the Orient Express, one notably more plausible, but less palatable, than the other. Or the reader agrees to consume the supplement of Poirot's postscript as part of the text. The latter choice offers a conclusion, but that conclusion is more resolute than had been desired, it is not simply the conclusion of a text but the death of a canon.

At the point of the close of Hastings' narrative Christie is offering the reader the ultimate point of conflict in the dialogue between the aesthetic and the ethical. To choose to end with the end of Hastings' narrative would be to allow the aesthetic to take dominance, by choosing Poirot's postscript the reader accepts the ethical solution, even though it is not that which is aesthetically desired.

Following the reading of Curtain any rereading of earlier Poirot texts would now have the intertextual dimension of the inevitability of death as a process that affects all; something that raises an interesting qualification to Auden's argument that such texts are not rereadable because they have no capacity to change. What Curtain achieves, by applying the awareness of the death drive to the Poirot canon, is to offer a new aesthetic

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[261] Robin Woods, (1997) ""It was the Mark of Cain": Agatha Christie and the Murder of the Mystery"

dimension to the construction of the detective. There is an awareness of an ultimate conclusion towards which all earlier texts must be looked upon as contributing factors. That a good number of the texts were written with the author's awareness of this conclusion only adds to this.

The location of the "unintentional repetition" is central to the narrative construction. Equally important is the following progression of the analysis that Freud presents:

> In the unconscious mind we can recognise the dominance of a *compulsion to repeat*, which proceeds from instinctual impulses. This compulsion probably depends on the essential nature of the drives themselves. It is strong enough to override the pleasure principle and lend a demonic character to certain aspects of mental life.[262]

By removing the third person narrator and entering the mind of the detective the text diverges by offering the reader access to the guilt of the detective. The process of their moral conscience in relation to the "instinctual impulse" to repeat the investigation process is laid bare. This is not framed as a pleasurable activity, rather the opposite, and the weighting here in the dialogue between the aesthetic and the ethical seems to offer a greater immersion within the "demonic" side. What is clear in this passage of "The Uncanny" is an early expression of what Freud would explore in more detail in Beyond The Pleasure Principle: the concept of the death drive.

As a text Beyond the Pleasure Principle explores the issue of war neuroses and other such traumatic events in order to discover whether Freud's earlier conception of the

[262] Sigmund Freud, (1919) "The Uncanny" p145

pleasure principle was always the dominant state in human existence. Freud concludes that this is not the case– that there is also the death drive that works in a way that presents a dialogic conflict with the pleasure drive and thus offers a far more complex conception of human motivation. Freud's famous conclusion in this is that "*The aim of all life is death.*"[263] There is always a sense of ending in any action that occurs within life, we are always aware of the fact that "death" is a presence in the process of any thing that we do. Christie was aware of this in the construction of Curtain through the fact that Poirot could only see one solution to the problem of X, one that had to necessitate the death of X as well as his own death, but also the death of the series. There appears to be a divergence within Christie's own canon. In the context of this text the solution is not that of the dream work search for wish fulfilment but a death drive need for a complete end. But is this not the case in all detective fiction? In the dream work the desire for x, the Eros of wish fulfilment, was something that was produced by dream. In the detective text, as illustrated above, x is something that is already there that needs to be uncovered, the desire is still present but now as Thanatos, the need to negate with the death drive.

The conflict of the daydreamer is yet again evoked in this. The daydreamer was said to be someone who indulged in their fantasies only to be ashamed of those fantasies to an extent that they could be said to elicit guilt. The pleasure principle can be seen to ally to the wish fulfilment element of the fantasy, whilst the personal chastisement illustrates how the death drive works within this model. It has already been demonstrated how the detective fiction reader parallels the daydreamer and here there is further reinforcement of that parallel.

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[263] Sigmund Freud, (1920) "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" trans. Strachey, J (1955), p38

The compulsion to repeat is central to the death drive's relationship with the pleasure principle:

> But how is the compulsion to repeat– the manifestation of power of the repressed- related to the pleasure principle? It is clear that the greater part of what is re-experienced under the compulsion to repeat must cause the ego unpleasure, since it brings to light activities of repressed instinctual impulses. That, however, is unpleasure of a kind we have already considered and does not contradict the pleasure principle: unpleasure for one system and simultaneously satisfaction for the other. But we come now to a new and remarkable fact, namely that the compulsion to repeat also recalls from the past experiences which include no possibility of pleasure, and which can never, even long ago, have brought satisfaction even to instinctual impulses which have since been repressed.[264]

What Freud cites as illustrations of such unpleasure includes the issue of "loss of love"[265] that has been central to the other theories of Freud, as well as central to Auden's conception of the detective fiction reader. This is the realm of the narcissistic primitivism that has already been seen to be central to the conception of guilt that Freud outlines. By placing the compulsion to repeat as central to the death drive, guilt is an equal component part of the articulation of this drive. We are reminded of the following statement from "The Uncanny":

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[264] Freud, p20

[265] Freud, p20

> Yet it is only this content– which is objectionable to self-criticism– that can be embodied in the figure of the double: in addition there are all the possibilities which, had they been realised, might have shaped our destiny, and to which our imagination still clings, all the strivings of the ego that were frustrated by adverse circumstances, all the suppressed acts of volition that fostered the illusion of free will.[266]

The notion of free will is one that will always be in conflict with the awareness that life will have an inevitable end. The theory of the death drive offers an insight into how an individual functions in the paradoxical situation of attempting to live a life that has free will when the ultimate conclusion is always inevitable. The conclusion in the detective text will be the restoration of order but the process of reaching that conclusion is open to multiple variations.

This application of formula is something that Freud was aware of in relation to this theory. As he states in Civilisation and its Discontents ,[267] he is aware that that text has within itself a repetitive structure that applies to the conflict between the death drive and the pleasure principle, here characterised as "Eros", upon a variety of differing conception of the human existence. Freud justifies this in the following:

> The repetition of the same formula is justified by the consideration that both the process of human civilisation and of the development of the individual are also vital

[266] Sigmund Freud, (1919) "The Uncanny", p. 143

[267] Sigmund Freud, (1930) Civilisation and its Discontents

> processes– which is to say that they must share in the most general characteristic of life.[268]

This struggle between the death drive and the pleasure principle is the central narrative drive of human existence, what Peter Brooks calls "Freud's Masterplot."[269] By redefining it in the terms this thesis has been using, the death drive is the ethical dimension of the dialogue, the inevitable conclusion as restoration, where the pleasure principle, indeed Barthes' jouissance, is the aesthetic. The conscience, and the sense of guilt that arises through the conflict of these drives, is the reader's means to understand and progress.

If the death drive makes reader aware of the fact that the narrative that s/he experiences has an inevitable conclusion, it becomes of interest as to how s/he defines their conflict with that inevitability. As Freud states in Beyond the Pleasure Principle:

> The pleasure principle, then, is a tendency operating in the service of a function whose business it is to free the mental apparatus entirely from excitation or to keep the amount of excitation in it constant or to keep it as low as possible.[270]

There is awareness in the process that the ultimate conclusion must be reached, even within the pleasure principle there is a sense that the achievement of pleasure, like Barthes' jouissance or Shklovsky's motif, must be a transitory process that negates the excitation

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[268] Freud, p139

[269] Peter Brooks, (1984) Reading For The Plot pp90-112

[270] Sigmund Freud, (1919) Beyond The Pleasure Principle p, 62

that has temporarily arisen, the sense of displacement or the uncanny. The aesthetic dimension is far more elusive in terms of the ability to define it and must always be explored in relation to the ethical death drive. As Peter Brooks states, what is all important about the aesthetic side of the dialogue has to do with the inevitable progress towards death:

> Yet this must be the right death, the correct end. The complications of the detour is related to the danger of short-circuit: the danger of reaching the end too quickly, of achieving the im-proper death. The improper end indeed lurks throughout narrative, frequently as the wrong choice: choice of the wrong casket, misapprehension of the magical agent, false erotic object choice.[271]

The purpose of the aesthetic is to make sure that what the reader is experiencing in relation to the death drive is a narrative that s/he feels is appropriate to the sense of guilt in the conscience. This raises the aspect of free will. Satisfaction arises from the restoration of the balance between the aesthetic and the ethical, but it must be the correct satisfaction, not one that is forced upon the reader, instructed, but one that s/he has chosen. This brings about the compulsion to repeat, the need to be placed once again in that position where the reader is aware that s/he is making the choice. If the choice is one that is directed purely by pleasure, in that it takes the reader onto subplots or tangents that lead away from satisfaction, that in itself is a worthy experience of the freedom of choice that holds off the inevitability of death. At times the reader would choose the alternative, to make the choice that offers

[271] Peter Brooks, (1984) Reading For The Plot pp103-4

coinherence, as seen with the choices Christie provides in the conclusion of Curtain. As Freud states:

> The hypothesis of self-preservation instincts, such as we attribute to all living beings, stands in marked opposition to the idea that instinctual life as a whole serves to bring about death.[272]

The function of the pleasure principle is to complicate the narrative, and the pleasure arises from the confusion and obfuscation that makes the inevitable conclusion indistinct. What this amounts to is the fact that the reader is aware that s/he wants commonality between the aesthetic and the ethical, that they must ultimately reach the point of restoration that is death, but that this is wanted on their own terms.

It is in this that we become aware of the divergence between the golden age and the hard boiled detective text. As illustrated with Curtain, there may be a desire to have such freedom in the definition of our own narrative but the third party structure means that the reader is always at one remove from the detective who in turn is always, ultimately, dictating the narrative of death. In the first person narrative at the conclusion of Curtain, and consistently within the hard boiled style, the reader does not have this remove and is more acutely aware of their role in the aesthetic side of the dialogue that is present in the narrative of the conscience. The detective's guilt, the choices, become as much the reader's guilt and choices. The reader's conscience becomes dialectically interested and reactive to

[272] Sigmund Freud, (1919) Beyond The Pleasure Principle, p39

the degree to which the choices are those that s/he might make, particularly when such choices involve greater complexity rather than resolution.

The concept of self-preservation becomes central. In the golden age detective text guilt is felt by each of the characters who are part of the society but it is not a feature of the detective, the supplementary figure who has arrived as a coinhering force but not part of the society at any point. On few occasions does the detective ever feel a sense of self-preservation. Even in Curtain, in Poirot's narrative, there is no self-preservation, rather the literal self destruction of suicide. In the hard boiled detective text, where the reader is directly experiencing the situation of the detective through the first person, there is a different state of affairs:

> What appears in a minority of human individuals as an untiring impulsion towards further perfection can easily be understood as a result of the instinctual repression upon which is based all that is most precious in human civilisation. The repressed instinct never ceases to strive for complete satisfaction, which would consist in the repetition of a primary experience of satisfaction.[273]

In the hard boiled text the narrator is always caught in this sense of dissatisfaction and the pursuit of the resolution of such. There is the need– directly presented to the reader– of the striving for commonality in the aesthetic and the ethical that leads to the repetition of the need to combat the repression and allow for satisfaction. This repression is directly related to the reader as a need for satisfaction that s/he can also feel. It is the process of self-

[273] Freud, p42

preservation that needs this satisfaction. If the reader feels the satisfaction, the moments of jouissance, then, no matter on how small or transitory a level, are preserving their sense of self in the light of the impending inevitable death. What is also clear is the presence of the desire for x. The "further perfection" striven for is never definable except as something for which to strive; it is x: the locale of desire.

This works so closely to the reader's experience because, as Nicholas Royle[274] has stated: "The death drive in inextricably bound up with writing, narrative, and autobiography". It is in the latter concept, that of autobiography, that the hard boiled text makes its more involved connections. The feature of autobiography is by definition "by oneself", a singular narrative generated by a sole individual. Any first person narrative will adopt the tropes of autobiography, the self-reflectivity that allows for a greater qualification of the action as pertaining to oneself. In such a situation the reader becomes particularly interested in texts with those motifs that allow connection. Unlike the golden age narrative where the reader can rely on the detective to reveal the connections as pieces of a puzzle for reactive response with the third person narrator, in the first person hard boiled narrative the reader is driven to be proactive and to find those connections. The connections are as much about keeping the links with the narrator as they are with keeping the awareness of the situation. The reader is looking for connections because these are reminders of the process of the dialogue which in turn enacts the instinct for self-preservation that symbolises the process of life in the face of death.

This returns us to the idea of connective metaphors. In this we come to the work of Raymond Chandler as the central illustration of this form of the genre. It is a feature of

[274] Nicholas Royle, (2003) The Uncanny

Chandler's work that readers are constantly aware of the need to find connections, to try to define the x of desire, most felt through the exaggerated comparisons that he makes a characteristic of his narrator Philip Marlowe. Nicholas Royle has argued:

> Then at a so-called stylistic level, there are the comparative metaphors. These are the metaphors, like telephonic quickfire, which suggest that hyperbole is an almost extinct species, like humanity, and that this may be the last chance to see some. They have a force of absurdity, laughter and truth, producing a sense of familiarity or recognition, as if we knew them before. Like the telephone, they seem marked by death. They can seem "tired", and with the sort of despair which identifies them with a certain apocalyptic discourse.[275]

Royle makes clear how the use of this characterising trope shows both sides of the dialogic struggle that the text performs: on one side the reader sees these exaggerated metaphors as something satisfying in their humour, the extreme truth often emphasised through them, but in this s/he sees that these are only just keeping in the realm of the acceptably exaggerated. There is a near mania close to the surface, an extreme need to throw connections out into the society of the text in the hope that these take hold and move the reader on to the next point of understanding when understanding seems at its most far remove. The key words that Royle uses are "despair" and "extinct". In these exaggerated metaphors the reader recognises their despair performed through the processes explored with the joke work: the tendentious elements projected outward but returning inward to reflect the self's

[275] Nicholas Royle, (1990) Telepathy and Literature p174

displacement in the joke. The realisation is that it is only through the transitory attempts to connect that extinction can be avoided. These are tendentious jokes, the comparisons being negative with regard to that being described. In these comparisons there is connection, in the figurative sense, but disconnection in the personal sense. The comparisons emphasise the otherness of the figure to which the comparison is being drawn. Readers are being challenged in their reaction to these comparisons: is there agreement with Marlowe and equal tendentious humorous expression and cynicism; or are they dislocated from Marlowe and left without a means through which to process this world? The reader's natural instinct is to adopt a complicit position with the narrative voice presented. This calls for the reader to define an ethical position within their own understanding of that complicity and the choices made with regard to this.

As F. R Jameson stated about the detective text in "On Raymond Chandler":

> Indeed, it is as if there are certain moments in life which are accessible only at the price of a certain lack of intellectual focus: like objects at the edge of my field of vision which disappear when I turn to stare at them head on… In a minor way the unique temporal structure of the best detective story is a pretext, a more organisational framework, for such isolated perception.[276]

This lack of intellectual focus allows for emphasis upon the perceived separation that Jameson sees as characteristic in American society. In Chandler's construction of the detective the reader finds a character who exaggerates with his comparative metaphors, the

[276] F. R. Jameson, (1970) "On Raymond Chandler" p125.

perceived separation, yet, through the textual development s/he comes to realise that the character of the detective is himself an exaggerated comparative metaphor of the figure in society that he projects upon:

> But the form of Chandler's books reflects an initial American separation of people from each other, their need to be linked by some external force (in this case the detective) if they are ever to be fitted together as parts of the same picture puzzle. And this separation is projected out onto space itself: no matter how crowded the street in question, the various solitudes never really merge into a collective experience, there is always distance between them.[277]

It is the dialogue of the separation, and the reader's separation from the narrator in turn that is of interest. In many ways Chandler's text is the ultimate expression of tendentious joke-telling as the narrative form calls into question the relationship between each figure involved in the telling at all times. As with all jokes there must be some identification at the core for the telling to be successful. In terms of comparative metaphors Chandler is aware of the paradox of these being both separate and connected simultaneously, and he manipulates the degrees to which the balance of separation and connection in relation to differing characters is perceived, in order to create the dynamics of his narrative. As Jameson suggests, at all levels there is a desire for connection across society, but if all that links is the position of the other as part of a puzzle, is this a truly satisfactory connection to be part of?

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[277] Jameson, p131

The Long Goodbye is the sixth and penultimate Marlowe investigation, and the least formulaic in structure. Here Chandler takes the trope of the connective metaphor further than the quick tendentious joke in order to explore the degrees to which the reader searches for such connection. The sense of this need was central to Chandler's construction:

> The trouble with my book is that I wrote about half of it in the third person before I realized that I have absolutely no interest in the leading character… I'm going to have to start all over and hand the assignment to Mr Marlowe… It begins to look as though I were tied to this fellow for life. I simply can't function without him. (14 July 1951)[278]

The reader is at all times made aware of the way in which Chandler places his central character, Philip Marlowe, in relation to other characters who offer possible connection to the potential route that Marlowe himself could follow, often those of self-destruction. The text is an exploration of how Marlowe must define his sense of self-preservation. As the above quotation illustrates, Chandler initially intended a radical departure from his normal style but found that he needed Marlowe. The phrase "tied to this fellow for life" is the crux, as it introduces the concept of uncanny doubling in the need for connection that runs throughout the text: Chandler is "tied" in the sense of a sentence, but also "tied" in terms of Marlowe being what brings the author to life.

Chandler stated about the detective figure in general in 1949:

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[278] Raymond Chandler, (1951) The Chandler Papers p166

> The whole point is that the detective exists complete and entire and unchanged by anything that happens; he is, as detective, outside the story and above it, and always will be… The detective story is not and never will be a "novel about a detective". The detective enters it only as a catalyst. And he leaves it exactly the same as he was before.[279]

Chandler's voiced need of the function of Marlowe, and why the novel needed him to be the narrator, is to give the reader the impression of this static nature. Marlowe is faced with three doubles of himself who offer a destabilisation of this consistency, not least in the financial change that they can offer his life. Two of these are central to the double narrative of the text, being the male protagonists of the "mystery": Terry Lennox and Roger Wade. The third plays a far more subtle role in the text's portrayal of connection and as such is the more threatening to the stability that Marlowe needs. This is Linda Loring. The point the uncanny undercurrent reveals is that what draws these characters to each other is they are doubles and their understanding of each other demonstrates "the spontaneous transmission of mental processes."[280] This process of doubling is only fully understood by one of the characters, the unchanging Marlowe. In the light of the death drive, which the other three characters represent (Lennox in his haunted dreams of war time trauma and destructive marriage; Wade in his drinking; Loring in her fruitless pursuit of Marlowe) what Marlowe represents is the awareness of a need for self-preservation. The drama that Chandler creates is in the tension of this conflict and it is an aesthetically driven perspective on this conflict

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[279] Chandler, p115

[280] Sigmund Freud, (1919) "The Uncanny" p141

because, even though for the majority of the novel it may appear to be different when the other voices are more dramatically dominant, ultimately Marlowe is a voice of positivity, of restoration: in Auden's terms he is the voice of love and hope for mankind.

Chandler presents his character with a multiplicity of alternatives to the path chosen, each offering him the chance to sell his soul, reflected in a vision of the self, the uncanny double. What there is of mysterious development is apparent because Marlowe for once seems to have implicit understanding of the decisions these characters make. It is interesting that it is in this novel that Chandler chooses to quote Christopher Marlowe's Dr Faustus directly. Chandler presents a random, drunken woman reciting the following passage:

> "Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
> Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss."[281]

The reminder both in the verse, as well as the passion in which Chandler has his character deliver it, is that this tragic text of self-destruction is centred around a character looking for love, for eternity in another individual, finding this hollow when presented with what he assumes to be the perfection he seeks. It is the societies need for connection that Jameson indicated as being central to Chandler's world. This self-delusion is one that Marlowe never voices, nor feels need to. Even though the life he presents seems a solitary one, it is one of aesthetic and ethical equilibrium.

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[281] Raymond Chandler, (1953) The Long Goodbye p631

Readers are firstly introduced to the character of Terry Lennox in a preliminary story that for a long stretch of the text seems to be just an introductory anecdote that has little real impact upon the main narrative. Rather the opposite is true; Lennox destabilises and haunts the text in a way that is not dissimilar to the prologue in The Moonstone. Terry Lennox is described as such: "He had a young-looking face but his hair was bone white."[282] The combination of youth and this unnatural whiteness presents the reader with a character that is uncannily youth and age combined.

As the description continues it is revealed that Lennox is indeterminate in origin, American, educated in England but with characteristics from both. He has been "scarred" in the war, is a dependant on his wife. In many ways Lennox's biography is not dissimilar from that of Chandler himself, or more the case, Chandler prior to his writing career, except Chandler's war scarring was more emotional. Everything that Chandler presents in this character evokes the sense of duality. What is uncanny is the relationship that develops: "He would have told me the story of his life if I had asked him. But I never even asked him how he got his face smashed."[283] The detective never investigates this character and frequently repeats the statement "I didn't judge him."[284] They strike up an almost immediate fraternity from a chance encounter and in no time Marlowe is helping him flee from justice, destabilising his own identity. This lack of a need to judge is illustrative of the "instinctual impulse", the greater telepathic understanding of the character on Marlowe's part. What Chandler presents is a character so internally imbued with the sense of the

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[282] Chandler, p465

[283] Chandler, p483

[284] Chandler, p529

dialogic that Marlowe's function is negated as a coinhering force. Everything that Lennox represents is an exploration of internal guilt at work within the individual and the destructive qualities of the attempts to remedy this. Much of the remainder of the novel is motivated by the belief that this character has been framed and then killed. This seems the only inevitable solution but it is one that eats away at Marlowe in the way in which he conducts himself. It would be hard to call The Long Goodbye a revenge novel driven by the moralistic Marlowe, but like Hamlet there is the sense of the central character being placed in a destabilised realm where vengeance, if not the character's inclined motivating principle, needs to be the means of explanation. Throughout all this there is the minimal investigation of Lennox, he is the ghost that haunts the pages, the core of the story, but ultimately he is the motivating sense of morality that Marlowe needs to define his role as catalyst for the other investigations, the guilt personified.

The story is not this simple: Lennox is not actually dead, his role as ghost is in itself destabilised by the fact that he threatens to return. This is the final thing hidden that must be brought into the open to allow the conclusion of the story and the removal of the uncanny and it takes the process of the implicit, instinctual understanding of the character for Marlowe to find him. Lennox has received plastic surgery and adopted a new identity, he is in many ways his own double, although not fully so in view of the superficial changes, but Marlowe changes this to something more definite: "I'm not judging you. I never did. It's just that you're not here any more. You're long gone."[285] If we take this novel as the metaphorical depiction of the battle between author personalities, as Tom Hiney suggests, we have a definitive statement of intent in the negation of existence of one of those

[285] Chandler, p816.

personalities being realised by another. For the uncanny destabilisation to be removed, the stability of a returned equilibrium, this moral constant must remain. As Chandler suggested, the character of the detective must not change. This is seen in the choice not to judge, the refrain that has defined the relationship throughout that had been destabilised by Marlowe's sense of guilt. Through Lennox returning to the text as a constant of the relationship that had always been, Marlowe is allowed to retain the unchanging position that he has always occupied. The aesthetic influence that Lennox has represented, in the role of the ghost, is no longer one that impinges on Marlowe's world.

If Lennox is a representation of Chandler's past, so Wade is a representation of Chandler's fears for his future: the trash novelist, rich, but alcoholic, hollow, and unfulfilled. Another key to the doubling that is in play is that each of the characters is described as being the same age, forty-two. This is not how it appears from reading; instead there is the feeling of Wade being a much older man which arises from the depiction of a life with no future. In contrast to the mystery of Lennox we get the Who's Who account of Wade[286], and the major feature of the character is his continual self-referencing speech. Where with Lennox the reader is told little but gains a sense of character, here much is told but little outside of a sense of preoccupation is known. In the loose Hamlet analogy, the role Wade takes is that of Claudius, a character who has achieved a certain status but is conflicted by the means through which that status has been reached. If the purpose of self-preservation is to allow the means through which to find the right death, Wade is caught in conflict as to whether the inevitable death that he is on course for is indeed that. Lennox is about the negation of self, whereas Wade is about the attempt at a precise definition of self.

[286] Chandler, p561.

In the same way that Lennox can never really remove himself, with the scars still apparent after the plastic surgery, so Wade's process is equally self-defeating: "I'm supposed to understand what makes people tick. I don't understand one damn thing about anybody."[287] It is the attempted negation of self that ties Lennox to Wade, but Wade, through death, takes the more drastic route. The solution to his attempted self-definition can only be found this way. The irony is that whilst his death is considered suicide this self-definition appears to be achieved. The right death is realised only for it to be negated by the revelation of murder. Marlowe has again an "instinctual" understanding of the character and his ultimate fate that allows him to remain detached. He knows that this course is both the right death for the character and for the process of his wider investigation. Wade must ultimately become the victim of his own previous sins, his murder the result of his previous abuses. Wade cannot be allowed to have a death that presents an unbalanced aesthetic influence on the society, it must be ethically appropriate as well.

Marlowe represents the focal point through which both of these analyses of self can be interpreted. What Chandler is doing is playing upon the functional purpose of the detective. If the novel is an exploration of the self by the author, the detective becomes the analyst whose intervention finds commonality between the aesthetic and ethical forces. This metaphor is further confirmed by the passive intervention of the Marlowe character who allows the doubles to bring about their own negation.

This conclusion becomes more problematic through the presence of a third double within the text, one that is far more destabilising through the double complication of firstly not being part of any direct mystery, not in a role to evoke the stoic version of Marlowe,

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[287] Chandler, p601

and secondly, being embodied in the physique of a woman. The character of Linda Loring offers a direct connection between the three central male characters and Chandler uses her as a means through which the reader can achieve further clarity in terms of where the understanding of the destabilisation of the text should lie.

As a woman Linda Loring represents the death drive through the centrality of women that Royle highlights: "The death drive has to do with the figure of woman."[288] In Freud's work death is rarely separate from the notion of the primal scene and women evoke the oedipal conflict. The desire that the characters feel for Loring is in turn what leads to their destruction. Lennox and Wade are both, in part, brought to their fates through allowing themselves to succumb. Marlowe is placed in the same position, being offered marriage as incentive: the sacrifice comes in the moral stability that Marlowe must take. Loring may seem to be a perfect partner for Marlowe, in her cynicism and general world view his female double, but he must refuse as marriage is presented as a symbol of death throughout the text. The concept of the femme fatale is here rooted in the desire of the male rather in than in the action of the woman. Her presence alone ushers in the presence of the death drive and the need for self-preservation. Lennox's wife dies to initiate the mystery and set her husband on the run, the Wade marriage is one of violence and self-destruction, even Loring is in the process of divorce. To marry, Marlowe would have to give up his objectivity and become part of this world. In the loose Hamlet analogy Loring evokes a sense of being Ophelia whilst also conversely representing Gertrude. As with Shakespeare's text, the female cannot escape the connotation of death when it should represent life– indicating the corruption at the heart of the society presented. Marlowe

[288] Nicholas Royle, (2003) The Uncanny, p87

could not take the appropriately divorced style he has with Wade and Lennox in this situation and must remain single.

Freud stated that dream thoughts "represent foreground and background, conditions, digressions and illustrations, chains of evidence and counter-arguments."[289] What is Marlowe as a construction except an illustration of these aspects of dream thoughts? He is the epitome of Auden's historical event that is member of a class of one, arises through provocation, and provides the motivation for subsequent historical events to occur. Unlike the ethical dictation that is the dominant conclusion of the critical model, Marlowe exists as a facilitator of the aesthetic, the marginal details that Ginzburg highlighted as being the foci of the detective/historian/analyst. By reflecting the three figures who offer extremes of the aesthetic potential that Marlowe recognises as being within himself he provides for the reader the location for the coinherence of the desire for x. Marlowe stands as an illustration of those aspects that feel omitted in the character construction of the other three figures, making them destabilised in our reading relation to them. As George Grella states:

> The detective thriller maintains the necessary equivalence between the social and the moral code: a minute flaw in breeding, taste, or behaviour– the wrong tie, the wrong accent, "bad form" of any sort– translates as a violation of an accepted ethical system and provides grounds for expulsion or condemnation. Because of this system the unofficial investigator succeeds where the police fail.[290]

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[289] Sigmund Freud, (1901) "On Dreams" p660

[290] George Grella, (1976) "The Formal Detective Novel" p88

Marlowe is unchanging because he must always be the position in the dialogue that the reader can return to for confirmation and affirmation. Like the images in the connective metaphors that Chandler uses, the reader recognises a connection between Marlowe and the other characters but is destabilised by the unusual connection on a tendentious level that defines them as the focus of, not the complicit party to, the joke. Through the detective dialogue, the reader is taken through a series of "goodbyes" to character alternatives. Readers explore Lennox, Wade, and Loring and fail to ultimately find jouissance in the developed dialogue with those characters as their hidden, uncanny, motifs become revealed as those that are imbued with death rather than life. As a detective existence must be one of small deaths characterised by these "goodbyes", once the desire for x within these characters is defined and removed so it is that the text must conclude.

Marlowe concludes, "To say goodbye is to die a little"[291], but this is the necessary death that the detective must accept. The alternative which would arise from succumbing would be a complete death. What is more, it would be the wrong death. The detective in this form of the genre is the ultimate motif. The central role of language in the first person construct, as a means through which to create reader identification, represents what Ross Macdonald[292] called the ability to demonstrate the public and the private simultaneously. This is a text about the detective as the facilitator of "goodbye", it is "The Long Goodbye", but it is the right "goodbye". Marlowe may still be alone and short of money but he still has his integrity. The parallel with Curtain is clear, where Poirot's confession offers an extreme conclusion but does restore the moral standing of Hastings, our avatar figure, and the

[291] Chandler Raymond, (1953) The Long Goodbye, p804

[292] Ross Macdonald, (1973) "The Writer as Detective Hero" p182-3

reader. The dialogue between the aesthetic and the ethical is not about extremes on either side. Rather the definition of a successful detective text would be one where the overriding sense in the conclusion is one of restoration and negation of destabilisation, not triumph or defeat.

CONCLUSION: THE VALUED CRIME NOVEL

In the penultimate paragraph of "The Guilty Vicarage" Auden turns his attention away from detective fiction in order to analyse literature in general:

> If one thinks of a work of art which deals with murder, *Crime and Punishment* for example, its effect on the reader is to compel an identification with the murderer which he would prefer not to recognise. The identification of fantasy is always an attempt to avoid one's own suffering: the identification of art is a sharing in the suffering of another.[293]

The word "fantasy", central to Freud's conception of the daydream, is rejected as a means which offers a meaningful experience for the reader. To suggest that to fantasise is to avoid implies that Auden is characteristic of those people who feel ashamed of having such mental activity. The opening paragraph of "The Guilty Vicarage" introduces this sense of shame when he compares the experience of reading detective fiction to addiction, another human experience that is often present but not voiced in detective fiction. This leads Auden to state that the purpose of the essay is that "detective stories have nothing to do with works of art" but what is often missed about them is the "magical function" that they are the means for explaining.

It is clear that Auden is tapping into the same paradoxical experience that Freud characterised in the daydream. The daydream is that necessary replacement to childhood play:

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[293] W. H. Auden, (1948) "The Guilty Vicarage" p24

> For many things which, if they were real, could give no enjoyment, can do so in play of phantasy, and many excitements which, in themselves, are actually distressing, can become a source of pleasure for the hearers and spectators at the performance of a writer's work.[294]

The satisfaction process helps the subject to understand the world around them. That this is associated with shame and guilt is important as it offers an illustration of a moment of crisis within the adult's perception of their place within the adult world: the understanding of adult feelings and urges that are defined by Freud as those of ambition and eroticism. These are moments where there has to be interaction with an other, a state that is also necessitated within the climate of crime. A criminal act, be it in the daydream or the fictitious construct, like the tendentious joke, cannot be conducted in a singular environment; there has to be the aesthetic that finds the appreciation in the construction, the ethical that offers a censuring qualification, and the locale of both that observes and finds the suitable balance for satisfaction.

Detective fiction's remove from suffering is centred on Auden's perception of "identification" and this has been central to the arguments of this thesis. Identification was central to the analysis of both Curtain and The Long Goodbye. Neither of these texts has avoided suffering within the reading experience. They equally did not shy away from placing the reader in a position of recognition when asked to identify with the murderer. In these texts the climax of the "right death" could be taken as being a conclusion that rests

[294] Sigmund Freud, (1908) "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming", p144

directly on the reader's identification with suffering. Where these texts comply with what Auden concludes is through the position of just this identification at the end of the text so that it does not have to be sustained. In both of these cases, although the reader is asked at points to identify with the murderer, at the denouement this is rejected. This is an important qualification, as rejection is not avoidance. In order for the reader to reject the motivation of the murderer there must have been moments where that reader has felt contiguous with that murderer's actions, such as finding aesthetic appreciation in the locked-room mystery's clever construction. Avoidance would suggest no such connection, that the reader has been led by the narrator in a purely readerly, blinkered and ignorant fashion. Not only does this not comply with the reading experience that has been explored within the earlier chapters of this thesis but it also raises the question as to what sort of reading experience would be characterised by avoidance? What is more, Auden seems to be aware of this when he states that the reader would "prefer not to recognise" the murderer, in other words reject that this impulse to commit such acts is one within her/himself.

Auden's use of "prefer" is equally important, as it introduces a dialogic dimension to the reading process. Freud helps to explain this: "Phantasies, moreover, are the immediate mental precursors of the distressing symptoms complained of by our patients."[295] The need is for the reader to accept the existence and purpose of the "phantasy" so that it can be redefined before being allowed to adopt such a precursor role. As Freud stated the daydreamer feels "ashamed" by the "phantasy" and it is the acceptance of this "shame" that offers the potential for "distressing symptoms". A distinction has to be drawn between guilt and shame, as Stephen Knight suggests. Knight argued that in a

[295] Freud, p148

narrative of shame the reader would feel their means to access emotion is dictated to them by the "valued" group. The overriding sense is one of exclusion which in turn further emphasises the feelings of inferiority that characterise shame. In Freud's daydream model there is a sense of exclusion in the idea of not wanting to express the given fantasy. According to Knight there should be no dialogue here, the experience should be monologic. But in Freud's model there is a reaction to that shame that expresses the desire for x. The fantasy text is not the shame text, it is the role of the dialogic to redefine this shame as guilt which removes the external imposition of the "valued" group and redefines it as a solely individually perceived state.

Despite such conclusions it cannot be ignored that Auden still defines an area of literature as being not only other to detective fiction but by linguistic and social inclination superior to such texts. Texts that allow for identification with the suffering contained therein are characterised by Auden as "Art" and such a label in itself suggests a "valued" group that is looking to dictate. Auden saw the hard boiled school as falling within this arena, his criticism being only directed at the golden age school, but I have argued that this is not the case. Marlowe is not a character of shame, his adoption of the flaws of his society is not simply accepted in a static agreement. He reacts, which suggests that guilt is his, or the reader's, driving emotion. The same was seen in the analysis of "The Purloined Letter" where Poe humanises Dupin, and in the flaws that Conan Doyle places within Holmes. Here is a "person in the know", the character with "value", only for the time during which the reader is at a remove from the understanding of guilt: it is as much the reader's coinherence with this character, adopting their commonality, that is the purpose of the reading experience. For the right death to occur, the detective should in the end be negated of "value" for the purpose of that text, as s/he offers no further understanding of this society

than that which the reader can elicit her/himself. In such a position the reader becomes the only "person in the know" and the only possessor of "value".

That "valued" texts are those that have identification with suffering appears to be a strange delineation and one that must be explored to qualify my conclusions concerning detective fiction. As Auden continues:

> Kafka's *The Trial* is another instructive example of the difference between a work of art and the detective story. In the latter it is certain that a crime has been committed and, temporarily, uncertain to whom the guilt should be attached; as soon as this is known, the innocence of everyone else is certain. (Should it turn out that after all no crime has been committed, then all would be innocent.) In *The Trial*, on the other hand, it is the guilt that is certain and the crime that is uncertain; the aim of the hero's investigation is not to prove his innocence (which would be impossible for he knows he is guilty), but to discover what, if anything, he has done to make himself guilty. K, the hero, is, in fact, a portrait of the kind of person who reads detective stories for escape.[296]

The distinctive element is in the position of distance from the direct working of the criminal mind. Much as the divergence from the golden age to the hard boiled school placed the reader closer to the process of the detective mind, the "crime fiction" text places the reader within the confines of the criminal thus further emphasising Joel Black's statement that "Murder drives a wedge into our comforting belief that things are what they seem, that the

[296] W. H. Auden, (1948) "The Guilty Vicarage" p24

world is as it ought to be."[297] Where these texts differ is in the displacement created by the uncanny nature of repetition in the criminal act is more overtly addressed within the text itself, as the criminal mind is presented directly and not through the filter of the detective's theorising. We are asked to be complicit with these thought processes and accept a logic in the way in which their actions comply to the ethical position that has been presented. There is a greater sense of ambiguity in the way that the reader is expected to react to the ethical perspective that the narrative presents. The debate is raised as to whether these are texts that are concerned with shame rather than guilt in the reading experience and what is meant by Auden's suggestion of identification with suffering and this "art". This presents questions within the Freudian model as it suggests stagnation, a lack of movement in the reading process. The reader is caught in the moment of realising the need for the daydream but that daydream remains static and suggests the "distressing symptoms" that lead to pathology rather than satisfaction.

In order to explore the reading experience, the "art", in such texts, Auden's two textual choices are strong examples, but it would be more productive to look at texts that are closer to the literary traditions that we have been looking at: the contrasting approaches within Graham Greene's A Gun For Sale[298] and Brighton Rock[299], and how both approaches are adopted simultaneously in John Fowles' The Collector[300].

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[297] Joel Black, (1991) The Aesthetics of Murder, p18

[298] Graham Greene, (1936) A Gun For Sale

[299] Graham Greene, (1938) Brighton Rock

[300] John Fowles, (1963) The Collector

A Gun For Sale and Brighton Rock are parallel narratives sharing the same primal scene. In their protagonists both texts explore different portrayals of criminality that can be seen as illustrative of the dialogue between the aesthetic and the ethical. In A Gun For Sale, Raven is working through his latest assignment with the awareness that prior to this he had been hired to kill the Brighton gangster Kite, an assignment that was successful. In Brighton Rock, Pinkie Brown is conducting a course of action that is designed to revenge the death of Kite. This similarly prefigures the events of the text. Raven is characterised as an initially unemotional figure whose sole satisfaction comes from the efficient completion of his assassinations; Pinkie, in contrast, is a highly emotional and reactive figure who loses rationality when his own ethical code is challenged. Read intertextually, A Gun For Sale is an exploration of the aesthetic criminal, whilst Brighton Rock presents the reader with the ethical equivalent.

A further distinction is that while Raven represents the characterisation of guilt, Pinkie represents shame. Greene, at the time, labelled A Gun For Sale as "entertainment" whilst he saw Brighton Rock as "literature," in the same way that Auden distinguished between "fantasy" and "art". If the fantasy text can be characterised as the text that explores guilt, and the art text shame, these two texts offer an interesting case study, not least because in later life Greene himself came to see his prescribed labels as being redundant[301]. To find two texts that were initially written to conform to different codes of literature from the same author, based upon the same primal scene, allows for a forum in which to see where such choices of delineation have been made and how these correspond to the reader's experience of such texts.

[301] P. D. James, (2009) Talking About Detective Fiction p14

Greene signals the relation that each character has to society within the enigmatic titles that he presents for each. A Gun For Sale is a displacement from the more conventional noir phrase "a gun for hire". To "hire" suggests complicity, a temporary acquisition that will always be in part owned by the original possessor; "sale" conversely is more absolute, it is imbued with a sense of finality, all of the guilt of the purpose for the gun is transferred to the purchaser. The tragic irony that runs through the text is that this is the desired position that Raven would like to be in but he knows that his gun can never be simply a distinct physical object. He is part of it; the gun is an anthropomorphic extension of himself and he is never able to separate from the guilt of what it has perpetrated. The death of Kite starts these thought processes in a way that has never been the case before, as his gun becomes a symbol of guilt:

> "I suppose killing Kite like that made me nervous." His voice trembled very slightly from fear and hope, hope because she had accepted one killing so quietly and might, after all, take back what she had said: ("Well done", "I wouldn't raise a finger"); fear because he didn't believe that you could put such perfect trust in another and not be deceived.[302]

The desire for Anne to accept that he is the said gun and to make that acceptable is the tragic dilemma that Raven is aware will never find solution. He becomes increasingly an

[302] Graham Greene, (1936) A Gun For Sale, p124

explicit figure of guilt, specifically defined within the terms of Greene's Catholic belief[303], explicit to an extent that Greene tempts the reader to identify and sympathise with this pitiable figure. Anne is the confessor and redeemer to whom Raven cannot confess. The irony that Greene adds to this is that Kite is a criminal and Raven's removal of him is something that, in other circumstances, would have been seen as admirable. The reader is not allowed direct access to this event, only the reaction it creates within Raven. This is a far less ambiguous action than Raven's latest assassination: that of a Czech government figure with the intention of starting a war.

Brighton Rock as a title seems more ambiguous, deliberately keeping the reader at one remove until further into the text, but has exactly the same role in relation to Pinkie. Pinkie's first murder is committed with the use of a stick of Brighton Rock in a capacity that Greene never reveals. It is symbolic of the child Pinkie in terms of age. It is also symbolic in the sense that shame is something that runs, like the words in seaside rock, through Pinkie. He has attempted to commit the murder in order to elevate his status with the "valued" group of Brighton gangsters of which he is part. The metaphor further emphasises Greene's repeated suggestions of the specific connectedness between Pinkie and the town which made him. This offers a sense of the inherited shame that links to the primal scene of Kite's death. When Greene articulates this sentiment directly, the reader realises that the title is more universal: "Look at me. I've never changed, it's like those sticks of rock: bite all the way down, you'll still read Brighton. That's human nature."[304]

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[303] Greene asserts the concepts of the seven deadly sins, confession, and repentance within the realm of Raven's crime.

[304] Graham Greene, (1938) Brighton Rock, p216

The evocation of the "human" is characterised through the metaphor that centres on a use of words. The shame that characterises this world is one that centres upon language, the whispers in the shadows of the impending threats from rival gangs, and the redefinition of emotional feelings through the filter of Catholicism. Brighton, the society and rules, is something that runs through all the characters and their situations– it is another valued group whose appreciation Pinkie aspires to. The stick of rock is in this society the ultimate marginal detail of Ginzburg's conception from which all that the detective seeks can be elicited. Greene is informing the reader that the world that he has created within the text is one that is as interrelated and singularly set upon a course as that of a classical tragedy, as we saw in Sayers' comparison of detective fiction with Aristotle. It is the primal scene of Kite's death that outlines all of the parameters within which this world functions.

As with A Gun For Sale, the explicit description of this event is left until later in the narrative when it is linked to the significant development that it has brought about, and like the earlier novel it is only presented in impressionistic terms. In both cases there is a woman who each character finds he is unwittingly reacting to. It is just prior to his wedding that Pinkie has his most significant moment of realisation concerning Kite's death:

> This was his territory, the populous foreshore, a few thousand acres of houses, a narrow peninsula of electrified track running to London, two or three railway stations with their buffets and buns. It had been Kite's territory, it had been good enough for Kite, and when Kite had died in the waiting-room at St Pancras, it had been as if a father had died, leaving him an inheritance it was his duty never to leave

> for strange acres. He had inherited even the mannerisms, the bitter thumb nail, the soft drinks.[305]

Kite is "Brighton" in this image, destroyed when he left for "strange acres". His role as father emphasises Pinkie's need to become "Brighton" as well, a fact that the incursion of Colleoni only serves to strengthen as a point of honour in his own mind, representing another, larger, valued group that will cast him in shame. But Greene continually emphasises that this is only one Brighton: a seaside holiday positive exists, but Pinkie cannot see this.

The irony is in the fact that the symbol of the rock for most readers would represent the positive Brighton. Greene's description of the rock emporium in the following scene, the location of the previous murder of Hale, takes on two new significances. Firstly the use of figurative language such as "the breakwater of Brighton Rock"[306] offers a foreshadowing of Pinkie's eventual demise upon the literal rocks of the surrounding cliffs. In contrast Rose's innocent domestic holiday desire for a "stick of Brighton Rock"[307] as a wedding present reminds us that the wedding is solely a result of the need to cover the connections to Hale's murder. The juxtaposition between the two Brightons is offered directly to Pinkie. In terms of Rose's connection through marriage she is taking possession of the rock, projecting her ownership of a different "Brighton" that Pinkie has left behind in shame. The wedding should make him literally face "Brighton" as no longer a singular entity. It is

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[305] Greene, p142

[306] Graham Greene, (1938) Brighton Rock, p194

[307] Greene, p194

Pinkie's misunderstanding, and the tragic flaw that runs throughout the character within the novel, that to be "Brighton" is to be shamed.

During the course of the text Rose is every bit Pinkie's equal, not least when she expresses the following sentiment:

> Precautions… Rose stood at the bed-end and pressed a hand against her body, as if under that pressure she could discover… *that* had never entered her mind; and the thought of what she might have let herself in for came like a sense of glory. A child… and that child would have a child… it was like raising an army of friends for Pinkie. If they damned him and her, they'd have to deal with them, too. There was no end to what the two of them had done last night upon the bed: it was an eternal act.[308]

This is central for the tragic irony of the shame of the text. Had Pinkie not been caught in his image of Brighton being singular, allowing for full access to a partnership with Rose, the matched ambition of the two would have been devastating. Her long-term ambition of a family business forming a Brighton against the world is far more chilling than his short-term race-track ambitions. Rose is where Pinkie should place his sense of value. Greene dares the reader to sympathise with Rose whilst making it clear that her misery in the final chapter is fully deserved.

The choice between the Brighton of Rose and the Brighton of Kite creates an event within Pinkie that recalls the shame of Kite's death:

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[308] Greene, p218

> Between the stirrup and the ground there wasn't time: you couldn't break in a moment the habit of thought: habit held you closely while you died, and he remembered Kite, after they'd got him at St Pancras, passing out in the waiting-room, while a porter poured coal-dust on the dead grate, talking all the time about someone's tits.[309]

The carnality at the point of Kite's redemption, coupled with Pinkie's own literal primal scene of the "Saturday ritual" of his parents in bed, strengthens the shame that Pinkie feels. This scene of disgust at Kite's carnality follows the consummation of the marriage: ""Such tits," Kite said and put a razor in his hand. He knew then what to do: they only needed to be taught once that he would stop at nothing, that there were no rules"[310]. Pinkie's shame is now significantly framed within a dream. The use of the word "tits" here, connected with the passing on of the razor, removes Rose's claim to Brighton. Such femininity is to be countered with violence, not embraced. Pinkie is once again the dominant possessor of Brighton as passed on to him by the dream repetition of the primal scene.

Raven, when faced with the legacy of Kite's death, finds it a hindrance to his sexual desire, as his guilt makes him realise he is not worthy of Anne. For Raven sexual desire is the fantasy that characterises his daydream. Pinkie finds that sexual desire offers only shame and is something to obtain mastery over. The irony is that Pinkie's mastery is only dream mastery and through his belief that his control over Rose is absolute in turn leads more definitely to his eventual demise.

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[309] Greene, p116

[310] Greene, p202

The points of crisis are foreshadowed from the openings, but it is the subtle differences, not least in terms of the reader's position in relation to the central character that offers a divergent reading experience. A Gun For Sale opens with the sentence: "Murder didn't mean much to Raven."[311] "Murder" is placed at the centre and as a means through which to assess the relationship to the character of Raven, qualified in its negativity. There is a judgement in the narrative voice that informs the reader to not sympathise with Raven. This instruction lets the reader know that the ethical dimension of the text is covered, that the central character is guilty. The exploration of the way in which Raven goes about such murders aesthetically can be an enjoyable one. By asserting such strong criminality at the beginning and allowing aesthetic sensibilities such freedom of appreciation, the ethical side of the dialogue reasserts itself as a statement for further crime to be avoided. The reader accepts Raven's eventual death as the "right death" in terms of the desire for x.

Brighton Rock opens from a different narrative position: "Hale knew before he had been in Brighton three hours, that they meant to murder him."[312] The reader is presented with the victim only to have those connected with the murder cast as a shadowy "they". The question that arises with the reader is an ethical one as to why Hale may be the victim of murder and this dominates the perception over the aesthetic. Brighton Rock is a novel that revels in the lack of description of the murders, they are not important as a means of aesthetic appeal to the reader. The murders in Brighton Rock feature solely to add to the shame of Pinkie by casting him as the transgressor of the Ten Commandments. The first crime is ultimately designated as not being a crime at all but "natural causes"– making the

[311] Graham Greene, (1936) A Gun For Sale, p1

[312] Graham Greene, (1938) Brighton Rock, p3

reader wonder how the "murder" promised in the opening line ended up not being. It is not the effect upon the reader that is desired; Pinkie believes he has committed murder and for Greene that is all that is desired. But there is always a question as to whether Pinkie's shame is rooted in his failure to achieve the correct acknowledgement for his actions from his valued group of "Brighton". Readers have to rely upon the ethical as the focus point in order to find the "right death" at the conclusion of the narrative. Again the aesthetic plays its part in defining how right this death is.

A Gun For Sale has been cast as a fantasy text because readers are more able to identify with Raven's desire, and in turn his guilt, than with Pinkie's shame, but it is not so simple. Readers would not necessarily choose to identify with Raven as he is a character motivated by criminality. The reader's closeness to him as a character, his thoughts and his dialogue with guilt, creates such a preference because there is a sense throughout that Raven is in fact investigating, and ultimately self-punishing, fulfilling the reader's desire for x; "our murderer and our detective, our hero and our villain"[313] as Robert Macfarlane describes him. For Bernard Bergonzi[314] Raven is "an early and inchoate version of Pinkie" and that "Greene risks sentimentality in trying to humanise him", casting him more as a Jacobean dramatic figure than that fitting for a noir thriller as he craves the final redemption. In Brighton Rock the reader is not called upon to offer a preference for sympathy to Pinkie, as J. M Coetzee highlights, it "is a novel without a hero"[315]. Any

[313] Robert Macfarlane, (2005) "Introduction" pix

[314] Bergonzi, Bernard (2006) A Study in Greene p63

[315] J. M. Coetzee, (2004) "Introduction" pix

identification that the reader has with the character would be with his self-revulsions as he is a character who has no real understanding of the shame that he feels.

Greene was aware of the differences of presenting the crime text from both the ethical and the aesthetic perspective. By tying both texts to the same primal scene there is a sense that A Gun For Sale and Brighton Rock are two distinctive explorations that ask to be brought together. John Fowles' The Collector offers a similar pairing of characters but delineates their differences by using a dual narrator structure as in The Moonstone. The structure creates a similar sense of being allowed to, as Patricia Highsmith defined it, "frolic with evil,"[316] the great difference in this text being that the narrative does not then allow for a conventional detective figure. What this text presents is the redefinition of the concerns of the detective text that the crime text is serving to explore. As Fowles stated in his preface to the revised edition of The Aristos:

> History– not least in the twentieth century– shows that society has persistently seen life in terms of the struggle between the Few and the Many, between "Them" and "Us". My purpose in *The Collector* was to attempt to analyse, through a parable, some of the results of this confrontation. Clegg, the kidnapper, committed the evil; but I tried to show that his evil was largely, perhaps wholly, the result of a bad education, a mean environment, being orphaned: all factors over which he had no control. In short, I tried to establish the virtual *innocence* of the Many. Miranda, the girl he imprisoned, had very little more control than Clegg over what she was: she

[316] Patricia Highsmith, (1983) Plotting and Writing Suspense Fiction P47

> had well-to-do parents, good educational opportunity, inherited aptitude and intelligence. That does not mean that she was perfect. Far from it.[317]

Although Fowles' terminology is different, the dialogue between the ethical and the aesthetic can be seen here. Fowles' definition of the "Many" suggests those who live lives that are dominated by the sense of the ethical within our society. The "Few" by extension are those within society who have the greater freedom in order to indulge their aesthetic sensibilities. Fowles' concern is about the individual's perception of their own relation to society and how they see themselves within it, assuming a certain existential connotation. What is important is that this is not simply about binary opposition, but definition with a sense of the other. As Fowles' own statement concerning the character of Miranda illustrates, although he may have intended to present her as one of the "Few," and initially does, it is the interrelationship with the "Many" and the desire to be one that makes her more interesting as a character. If we take what Fowles defines as being the "Few" to be those who have the greater aesthetic freedom– Miranda is an art student– it is the sense of wanting to subjugate this that is central to her character. She has allowed her aesthetic potential to become one of the "Many" in her subservience to the ethical figure of GP and his banal code of art. It is only through her relation with Frederick that she finally comes to have a sense of an individual self. It is her tragedy that she will never be allowed to present this to the world. The reverse is the same with Frederick: he may start as a figure of the "Many" but, once he has won the Pools and set his plan in action, he is one of the "Few" who can only assume that position in his capture and control of Miranda. His tragedy is that

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[317] John Fowles, (1968) The Aristos revised edition p10

he cannot sustain this role because the situation is one that offers no logical end point that could satisfy both parties. Fowles emphasises this duality in the choice of names, and Miranda's direct use of "M" and "F" when recording their dialogue in her diary. In these conversations they become symbols of the opposing forces that contradict their origins.

Fowles extends his argument:

> I meant simply that unless we face up to this unnecessarily brutal conflict (based largely on an unnecessary envy on the one hand and an unnecessary contempt on the other) between the biological Few and the biological Many; unless we admit that we are not, and never will be, born equal, though we are born with equal human rights; unless the Many can be educated out of their false assumption of inferiority and the Few out of their equally false assumption that biological superiority is a state of existence instead of what it really is, *a state of responsibility*- then we shall never arrive at a more just and happier world.[318]

The idea of the *state of responsibility* is particularly important when thinking of the conflict between shame and guilt, as it is in the latter that responsibility appears to be strongest. As illustrated with Raven, his guilt allows his death to be the right death, whereas with Pinkie it is only the inevitable death. What is distinctive is that for Fowles this *state of responsibility* is not one that simply arises out of the personality differences between these two groups but inherently carries connotations of wealth and class as well. There is a sociological dimension that illustrates an inequality in modern society that results in an

[318] Fowles, pp10-11

equivalent imbalance in the means through which to define the awareness of guilt within the given society. As William Stephenson puts it:

> Perhaps the most worrying implication of this for Fowles's audience– which, despite feminism, arguably applies as much today as in 1963– is not Clegg's kidnapping of Miranda at all, but their relationship's reproduction, in grotesque and sometimes inverted form, of the conventions of bourgeois domesticity.[319]

It is always a question within Fowles' society whether a commonality between characters can be achieved and the reader in turn must realise that the desire for such commonality with the society presented is always going to be open to further disruption as the portrayal of the many and the few take on defined narrative positions. The interests that arise from the moments of commonality that appear within the narratives of such seemingly diverse ethical positions are central to the reader's experience of this text.

This is a narrative that could be literally charted as an X with the point of coinherence coming at the middle point of the text. The single moment of commonality within The Collector is when Miranda states firstly: "It's weird. Uncanny. But there is a sort of relationship between us"[320]; and a page later states they are like "two people who've been married years"[321]. Each character has assumed the desired position of authority, has allowed themselves to accept their adoption of a middle point between where each one

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[319] William Stephenson, (2003) John Fowles p21

[320] John Fowles (1963) The Collector, p139

[321] Fowles, p140

should naturally be. They have achieved a "happier world." The pointed use of the word "uncanny," with all of its Freudian relevance, informs readers that these two characters have at this point uncovered what they need in each other, their shame and guilt is equal with regards to the acts that each has committed. In a conventional romance this would be a point akin to Rachel's forgiveness of Blake within The Moonstone, the moment of extreme jouissance where readers celebrate the characters becoming one. Each of the characters has successfully acted as the detective for the other. But it is the nature of the narrative and what Fowles wants to say about the destructive purpose of the sense of the "Many" and the "Few" which means that the end of the novel can only be singular.

This is a world that takes on the tropes of gothic romance and perverts them to a point where any conclusion that involved Miranda being released, or Frederick committing suicide, would turn the text into bathos. It is an inversion of The Tempest where the dominant, autocratic figure can present benevolence at the conclusion. Fowles has to redefine what the "right death" of Miranda is for the narrative. The choice of pneumonia allows a certain ambiguity to persist concerning Frederick's moral responsibility: allowing her to die of illness is not as absolute a criminal act as direct murder. Furthermore, the choice of this mode of death allows Miranda a delirium that offers Fowles the method through which to become more abstract in his presentation of responsibility. In her final entries, and her final reported utterances in Frederick's narrative, it is clear that Miranda has visions that express religious reverie. Her *state of responsibility* is made secure as by placing herself against God as an equal, she recognises her own guilt and abandons the valued figures represented by GP, Frederick, and her mother.

Frederick is offered a similar conclusion. Much has been said about the perceived ambiguity of Fowles' conclusion to The Collector where Frederick muses:

> I have not made up my mind about Marian (another M! I heard the supervisor call her name), this time it won't be love, it would just be for the interest of the thing and to compare them and also the other thing, which as I say I would like to go into in more detail and I could teach her how. And the clothes would fit. Of course I would make it clear from the start who's boss and what I would expect.[322]

Frederick is given the chance to repeat but it casts him into a renewed position of shame comparable to that expressed earlier in his need to photograph Miranda in sexually provocative poses despite his continued denial of a sexual interest. Frederick has always stressed that Miranda was singular as a focus and realises here the shame of betraying that previous claim. For readers it is extremely writerly, but what must be recognised is that for Frederick to find his point of satisfaction again there will have to be the sacrifice of another "M". In this sense it is extremely readerly, as the criminality is confirmed as too morally wrong to be repeated. The Collector complies with Auden's suggestion of the art work calling for an uncomfortable identification with the criminal mind. Miranda's detective function has brought this identification to the reader but not through a sense of identification with her as a character, rather through our mutual dissatisfaction that corresponds with that of Frederick. This identifies the specifics of the need to repeat, to compare the experience the second time, following the minor shifts caused by the first experience, to identify at what points the moments of jouissance are universal in their satisfaction. Where Fowles offers complexity is in the fact that in this text we realise that

[322] Fowles, p283

Miranda has found a "right death" and that her death was "right" for our understanding of Frederick and for her re-claiming of a form of Eden.

Looking at the narrative of Frederick one question arises: who is the intended reader? What is this text meant to be, a confession? A boast? Certainly the above paragraph casts the former into doubt. This is further made ambiguous by the inclusion of Miranda's diary. Fowles could easily have made the text two separate and distinct narratives, but instead he chose to enclose Miranda's diary, much like Miranda was enclosed, between two walls of Frederick's narrative. This begs the question, is the reader to assume that Frederick intends them to read Miranda's narrative as an intentional supplement to that which he himself is presenting? What this achieves is the text as Socratic argument: his case for, her case against, his rebuttal; and the most intriguing choice, his latter narrative is split into two very short sections. In section four Frederick references finding the diary: "she only thought of herself and the other man all the time"[323]; and identifies it as a catalyst for his change of heart regarding a Romeo and Juliet-style mutual death which Frederick had seen previously as the right death in conclusion of his section three narrative: "It would be a real tragedy. Not sordid."[324] There is a suggestion that section four is intended to be a substitute for Miranda's rebuttal. With the inclusion of section four, the sordid Frederick offers the ultimate reason for the reader to prosecute, the absence of romanticism within the text as defined by the inversion of the classic romantic paradigm. It is this structural peculiarity that demonstrates the shame that is present in Frederick's narrative. Frederick needs to

[323] Fowles, p281

[324] Fowles, p276

present Miranda's side of the story because he cannot articulate his own guilt: it is something that he is not convinced he possesses.

Both characters offer the dual purpose of identification and distance, of being knowable and unknowable much as a figure like Holmes or Poirot has to be. Miranda, like the detective in the traditional text, has served as a means to identify the criminal and their effect upon society, only to then leave that society with the judgement of the criminal confirmed: the law has not been a feature of the reading experience, and justice is not served. Solution is left to the reader as it was in Curtain or Murder On The Orient Express, but the reader does not have the guidance of a Poirot because the criminal has reasserted his position. Miranda stands in the text as a figure such as Roseanna or Ezra Jennings in The Moonstone. In that text those characters, through their contemporary narratives, reflected on the events at the time and the guilt that existed within the world concurrent to the events. Miranda's diary acts in the same way: like Jennings and Roseanna she is the victim and accuser laying bare the destabilisation present in the world of the text at that time with her diary entry openings offering brief tonal overviews: "I keep on thinking the same thing. If only they knew. If only *they* knew."[325]; "I hate the way I have changed."[326]; "The curse is with me. I'm a bitch to C. No mercy"[327]; "I have eaten nothing for five days."[328] Where Frederick is reflectively narrating after the fact, with all the faults of omission and reduction that is typical of such narrative, Miranda's diary form is more direct and

[325] Fowles, p117

[326] Fowles, p129

[327] Fowles, p157

[328] Fowles, p221

immediate. Miranda's narrative calls for the dialogue between the aesthetic and the ethical to take place by redefining Frederick's reflection as a present horror despite the foreknowledge that Frederick's narrative has provided. As Fowles stated:

> She is an existentialist heroine although she doesn't know it. She is groping for her own authenticity, [her own sense of self-knowledge]. Her tragedy is that she will never live to achieve it. Her triumph is that one day she would have done so.[329]

As Roseanna proves her love with silence and Jennings' brilliant work is proven correct, so Miranda is the motif of guilt and in reading her "right death" it satisfies the desire for x even though, like the characters in The Moonstone, readers would have preferred a situation where such an event need not happen.

As was the case in The Moonstone where Miss Clack's narrative was one of extreme truth, albeit indefensible in its conclusions, so Frederick is an extension of this, the problem being that through the emphasis of smut it was clear through Collins' narrative that Clack was to be seen as a figure within a joke construction. In The Collector the smut that is located in the text is within the narrative of Miranda just as Freud stated it was usually a female device. The way that Miranda portrays her Aunt Caroline, "I couldn't bare to be lumped with Caroline,"[330] and friend Antoinette, "almost parodying herself, she was so sex-kittenish,"[331] demonstrates the sexual jealousy that is characteristic of this joke form:

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[329] James Acheson, (1998) John Fowles, p10

[330] John Fowles (1963) The Collector p153

[331] Fowles, p166

it is used by Fowles to help emphasise the failure to meet potential, here sexual potential, that is the tragic centre of Miranda's narrative. For the reader this creates the same displacement that had occurred in Clack's narrative. Whereas in Collins' text readers have little concern for Clack due to the vicious undercurrent that this joke form elicits, so it is that readers find an equal difficulty in identifying with Miranda as a narrator for the same reason. The tragic irony is that all moments of smut within Miranda's narrative are within her past reflections with the characteristic condensation and indirect representation of such narrative form and, as such, characteristic of her perception of her previous self in relation to G.P: "Being female. Wanting to make him feel I was hurt."[332] In many instances, due to this form the target of the smut is actually Miranda herself and the weakness she sees within her own gender. Fowles is calling upon his readers to recognise this fact in order to realise the contrast with the Miranda presented in the temporal present of her diary entries to emphasise the further tragedy of her having come past this smut figure to the person that she has grown to be. The guilt that arises within the reader through reading The Collector comes through the understanding that such is the nature of the society portrayed that the potentiality within Miranda is not allowed to be fully expressed. All around her make her redefine her position as one of conflict not the search for commonality.

What The Collector offers is inequality still present in Miranda and Frederick's individual conclusions. If the detective fiction reader's need for repetition reflects an "addiction", a conviction that the sense of satisfaction found once cannot, and never will, offer a full cure to the sense of conflict between the ethical and aesthetic that creates the desire for x, then this final strand of text is the one that offers truth over satisfaction.

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[332] Fowles, p169

Frederick concludes with the need for repetition that is both a revelation of his true position of F in relation to M whilst also being his self condemnation in shame. This enables the reader to understand the criminal in a more direct way than the detective's denouement. This seems like the "right death" for the character in this narrative. Frederick is the reader of detective fiction left with the decision to repeat or die.

In a world where the inequalities of society are felt to be growing it is only logical that these appear more resistant to complete removal at the text's conclusion. Fowles refers to The Collector as a "parable" which suggests that it is a text from which the reader needs to learn, in the same way that the Newgate Calendar and the texts of Vidocq intended. As Fowles told Roy Newquist, with regard to the theme of the novel, "the common man is the curse of civilisation, not its crowning glory."[333] This sentiment is a trope throughout Miranda's narrative, as she expresses her hatred for the "New-people", "ordinary people", and the "Calibanity" of modern society. That these are people who cast a sense of shame to this world is expressed by Miranda's tendency at these times to portray herself as literary figures such as Robinson Crusoe[334], Major Barbara and Emma Woodruff who in turn represent Empire, Religion and Class. At such times Miranda sees herself as one of a valued group within whom lies the shame, but her power to inflict shame is an aspiration to that value not an actuality. The distance between the Miranda and Frederick is ultimately defined by the need for each to be paternalistic toward the other based upon the value system in relation to which themselves– art and science– do not hold guilt but do project shame through the definable position of authority.

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[333] James Acheson, (1998) John Fowles p18

[334] As Betteredge had in The Moonstone.

To go from Holmes, to Marlowe, to Frederick Clegg can seem like a logical course of transference in our understanding of the sense of guilt. In the case of the first readers were presented with the detective as the place-holder of the lack, the expert who could interpret the marginal details and reinterpret them in a way that made the commonality within the society reach a point where the uncovering of the criminal, and the relocation of guilt upon them, felt appropriate. There was a sense that it was essential for that figure to be at a remove, as their authority within the investigation, their value, needed to be asserted as unique and absolute, whilst the reader was at the furthest distance from the location of the guilt. With Marlowe this begins to break down but remains within the province of the romantic quest figure. Marlowe may allow readers a greater insight into his processes but it is clear that this is as much to assert his specific code of ethics, his own sense of value, as a means through which to interpret the aesthetic of that world. Frederick takes this a step further and the uncomfortable nature of this character arises through the detective position being taken as a means through which to assert a moral code, a system of value, which readers find reprehensible even though it is based on the marginal details analysed with Holmes like scientific method producing a logically expressed collection of deductions.

The main issue within The Collector is in the way in which it reverses the structure set out by Poe in "The Purloined Letter." Frederick's crime is one that has to be characterised by the hidden, both physically and psychologically. In Poe's text it was the fact that all knew that the Minister had the letter that allowed him to physically have it in the open, it had no personal worth to him except in relation to how he could use it. The value in the shame narrative was centred upon the Minister as a blackmailing figure and not upon the implied scandal that the letter represented. Similarly the diamond in The Moonstone found its value through how the characters projected onto it. In neither of these

cases was the object in itself the location of the guilt, and similarly Auden's expression of the corpse as the motivator of guilt, through a bad figure, divorces it from being the location of guilt in itself. Miranda is for Frederick not worth any more than that which he gains through the appreciation of her physical beauty, ideally in a static pose. She is the location of his guilt because it is her beauty, and the way that her animation contradicts it, that results in Frederick's actions in all instances as this is the location of value. There can be no moment in this text like Dupin's setting up the Minister with a false letter, or the reconstruction of Blake's evening actions, moments that essentially humanise the characters in the conclusion. Frederick's guilt is too deeply hidden and as such no restitution is possible because he cannot himself become part of the joke, a coinhering element of the society presented. It is this unattainable nature of the guilt of the society, the literal burying of it, that leaves the text so strongly expressing shame. Readers can only accept that Frederick is, at the conclusion, the valued group as he has bested them in the need to coinhere the guilt that the text demonstrates and that guilt remains shameful in its projection upon the reader.

There is a cautionary tale in the way in which both Brighton Rock and The Collector have been critically elevated to the level of "art" whilst also being such a reassertion of the narrative of shame. Certainly Auden's sense of "art" as the expression of shared suffering is clear in these texts, but must "literature" express such a shameful perspective? It is interesting that in the sixty years since Chandler was writing there has been a further divergence in the nature of detective fiction which has centred upon the reassertion of the police as the central figures of the genre. Starting with such authors as Ed McBain and his 89th precinct series, the repeating detective figure has moved away from being the amateur toward having a specific police role. In the case of McBain, Stephen

Knight[335] has argued the true objective narrative of verisimilitude reasserts a value in mechanistic formality and process that has since Doyle been distant. This objectivity offers a true sense of control.

The original templates of the golden age and the hard boiled school still seem to be central to this more professional, controlled delineation. The scientist detectives of Karin Slaughter, Patricia Cornwell, or Kathy Reichs, who emphasise, amongst others, the growing importance of forensics within police work, are still essentially Holmseian in their construction, their valued knowledge being an essential capacity to read the marginal details in a way that no others around them could achieve. Alongside these there is still room for the Poirot-like psychological detective whose understanding of human nature places them in the position of the place-holder of the lack that can be seen in Ruth Rendell's Wexford, P.D. James' Dalgleish, or Colin Dexter's Morse. Finally, and perhaps most adhering to the nature of fantasy, the hard boiled character of the unstable detective who is as much victim of the investigation as perpetrator of the solution, and the least controlled, is seen in figures such as Ian Rankin's Rebus, Michael Connelly's Harry Bosch, Jo Nesbo's Harry Hole, and Henning Mankell's Wallander, all of whom would stretch credibility concerning their continued employment were it not for their position of value in a violent and corrupt society that their own weaknesses serve only to reflect. Knight's point about control, in contrast to Chandler's unregulated private detective, is still central to these latter characters as they are still answerable to their police superiors. All three sub-genres are still consistently commercially successful and demonstrate the continued desire for the satisfaction that the detective text presents.

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[335] Stephen Knight, (2004) Crime Fiction 1800-2000: Detection, Death, Diversity

That control is central to these texts, and the degree to which that control is enacted being the demarcation point, is clear, and, as this thesis has argued, a sense of there being ultimate control is central to readings of detective fiction. The increased presence of the police is perhaps not as significant as it appears. In the case of Holmes, Poirot and Marlowe, the police existed as an often antagonistic force against which the detective could demonstrate their true value. This is not greatly different in the case of these recent texts. In the first group the scientist is a fringe player of a supportive body. In the second and third the valued detective is someone whose ability overrides the confines of the simplistic procedural method that is often characterised by an over-reliance on bureaucracy. The police force in our modern society has become a large and unwieldy institution, a "guilty vicarage," that now allows for the conception of such maverick individuals to be able to work within the confines rather than on the outside and as such offers a greater sense of reassurance to the reader who sees a need for the police force that readers of The Moonstone, for example, had to be convinced of.

This is not to suggest that the role of the amateur detective has disappeared but what is interesting is the type of writer who has begun to adopt this form. It has become common, almost essential, that a critically well-regarded author at some point attempts to write a detective text. Examples include: The Name of the Rose by Umberto Eco, The New York Trilogy by Paul Auster, The Light of the Day by Graham Swift, Once We Were Orphans, by Kazuo Ishiguro, The Final Solution by Michael Chabon, Enduring Love by Ian McEwan, Gentlemen and Players by Joanne Harris, The Simon Serreliar novels of Susan Hill, the three "Patrick Kavanagh" novels and Arthur and George by Julian Barnes. Even John Fowles has written a more conventionally structured detective text in his last novel A Maggot. Each of these texts would fall into Auden's delineation of "art" within the critical

world, yet they demonstrate more of the tropes of the classical detective than detective fiction itself appears to be concerned with in the present literary climate. It would be of interest as a further investigation from this thesis to look at the characteristic features of these texts and consider why the genre offers such an appeal for these authors as a means through which to best address their concerns to their readers.

Throughout this thesis I have demonstrated that the reader of detective fiction is someone who is looking for a narrative that serves to explain the guilt that is felt to be incipient within modern society. This has been characterised through the reader's need to find a balance, a commonality in the dialogue between the aesthetic and the ethical. What is particularly important in this interpretation is that it retains the multiplicity of the reading experience as a means through which to find a sense of satisfaction; texts that attempt to offer a sense of being too dictatorial will tend not to offer this. Auden stated that the reader of detective fiction is someone who suffers from a sense of sin, but what I hope that I have illustrated here is that just as important is a sense of creativity. To read detective fiction allows the potential to feel a correct death has been achieved, a conclusion that offers a satisfying sense of the desire for x.

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